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FILE No. 1161

OR

ADAM GRICE ON THE TRAIL OF
A PAIR OF POISONERS
By Old Cap Collier



THE BODY WAS
EXHUMED!



File No. 1161;

OR,

ADAM GRICE ON THE TRAIL OF A PAIR OF POISONERS.

BY OLD CAP COLLIER.

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CHAPTER I.

"Sergeant!"

"Yes, sir."

"Hand me File No. 1161."

"That is the last file in the cabinet, inspector."

"I am aware of that."

"There is nothing in it."

"I placed some papers in it last night."

"Oh, here it is."

"Thanks."

"Now step into the detective bureau and tell Adam Grice I want to see him."

"I desire to be alone with him."

"Very well, sir."

The sergeant left the office of the chief inspector, and a few moments later Adam Grice entered and saluted his superior, who invited him to be seated in the vacant chair by the side of the desk.

It was a morning during the latter part of the month of May, two years after Inspector Byrnes had been made chief of the Detective Bureau at police headquarters in New York City, and six months after Adam Grice had given up newspaper work and become attached to the Mulberry street corps of sleuths.

At a glance the detective saw that the inspector had something important to communicate, from the manner in which he toyed with the pages of the file and the anxious expression of his face.

The chief puffed away on his cigar for some minutes in silence as if he were formulating in his mind the information he intended to place before his aide.

Resting his right hand lightly upon some papers which lay between the pages of the file, the inspector looked at Grice and said:

"Adam, last night I received information in regard to a very peculiar case, which I desire you to investigate."

"You will have to exercise considerable circumspection, because there is very little evidence to work on."

"An heinous crime may have been committed, and then again, what I am going to tell you may simply be idle gossip."

"A willful, deliberate, and premeditated murder by the administration of poison may be uncovered."

"The evidence will be hard to get at on account of the length of time that has elapsed since the death of the supposed victim."

"As I said, it is a very peculiar case, and one which will require all your powers of intellect and reasoning to penetrate."

"I am prepared and ready to undertake the assignment," the detective replied as the inspector paused, and his face was aglow with excited expectancy.

"I knew it and that is the reason why I selected you to conduct the investigation."

"Thank you."

The inspector smiled.

He knew the young man's worth and he was al-

ways pleased with the enthusiasm which he displayed over his work.

Grice was not calloused and phlegmatic like the ordinary dyed-in-the-wool headquarters detective, who takes no pleasure in his work, but plods along in a rut from year's end to year's end, like a mere machine following the instructions of some superior and displaying no originality of thought or method.

He was a keen analyst, who studied mankind, analyzed their feelings and motives, and studied over every case presented to him the same as he would do with a problem in algebra.

"Incredible as it may appear," the inspector continued after taking a puff on his cigar, "if a crime has been committed, it is so heinous in its character and evinces so much profligacy and depravity of heart that it seems almost impossible that it should have been perpetrated within the limits of this community."

"Last night just before I was about to leave the office a gentleman was ushered in by the sergeant."

"I recognized the visitor as Jonathan Patterson, a broker who has an office at No. 55 Broadway, and who resides at Morris Dock."

"I am acquainted with Patterson," Grice interpolated.

"Then you are aware he is entirely trustworthy?"

"Yes; he is a man of honor."

"He came in here and as soon as he was seated he said he had a matter to place before me."

"I invited him to proceed, thinking he had a complaint to file about a robbery or some other trivial case, but I soon learned that he had called to give information about what was a very serious case, if true."

"Patterson stated the following facts:

"For a number of years Professor Linton Ellsworth and his wife Jane have conducted a school or academy for young ladies and gentlemen at Morris Dock."

"The establishment prospered and all the best families in the neighborhood sent their children to it."

"Professor Ellsworth had the reputation of being a very charitable and good man, and his pupils all spoke highly of his kind disposition."

"No word of scandal was ever heard about Mrs. Ellsworth until a few months ago."

"She taught in the school, and her scholars seemed to get along well with her, although at times she displayed a violent temper."

"During the Christmas holidays Professor Ellsworth was taken down ill."

"On the morning after Christmas he was visited by a friend who found him in a great deal of pain and suffering for want of attention."

"The friend was Mr. Patterson."

"The professor seemed greatly disturbed in his mind about something, and he requested Mr. Patterson to remain with him that evening."

"Mrs. Ellsworth came into the room and Mr. Patterson besought her to permit him to go for a phys-

cian, but she refused, saying that her husband was only troubled with a slight stomach ache from indigestion, and he would be all right in the morning.

"Mr. Patterson went home.

"The next day he met Dr. Leslie Farnsworth, who informed him that that morning he had been called in to see Professor Ellsworth by his wife; that he found the teacher in great distress, and that he suddenly died while he was present.

"The physician stated that it was a case of dysentery and heart failure.

"He gave a certificate to that effect.

"Mr. Patterson called at the house.

"He found Mrs. Ellsworth apparently prostrated with grief.

"There was present at the time a Spaniard, for whom the latter formed an immediate dislike.

"Why he did so he could not tell.

"The man seemed to be very attentive to the widow, and Patterson learned that he had been a member of the household for nearly a year.

"Professor Ellsworth was buried on New Year's day.

"A week afterward Mrs. Ellsworth sent out notices that she did not intend to conduct the academy any longer.

"A month later the academy was closed up.

"Mrs. Ellsworth left Morris Dock.

"She said she was going to live with relatives in Pennsylvania.

"The Spaniard accompanied her.

"Several weeks passed.

"Then the tongues of the gossips commenced to wag.

"Mr. Patterson heard many strange stories about the Ellsworths and then his suspicions were aroused.

"He commenced to make inquiries and then he discovered many startling things in regard to the life of his friend, the professor, which he had never dreamed of.

"There was disclosed such a scene of profligacy and immorality, so he says, that one seldom finds in this country.

"It appears that some time in the month of May last, about twilight, there appeared at the door of Professor Ellsworth's residence a man calling himself Mina and asking permission to stay for the night.

"He represented himself as the son of General Mina, and as being poor and friendless in a strange land.

"The permission was not only granted, but Mina was treated like an honored guest.

"He remained at the house.

"Mrs. Ellsworth soon contracted an intimacy with him.

"Then she commenced to treat her husband with the greatest cruelty and indignity—she virtually divorced herself from him.

"So wanton was her conduct that the servant girl left the house.

"The girl said nothing about the conduct of her mistress, however, until after the professor's death, and then she commenced to talk.

"Professor Ellsworth told the girl on the evening he was taken sick that something appeared like fire in his stomach.

"He was in great agony.

"He had eaten chicken soup for supper.

"This had been given to him by his wife.

"The girl informed Patterson that the remains of the soup she had thrown out into the yard.

"The next day the ducks of a neighbor, which had been in the yard eating, died in a very sudden and unaccountable manner.

"As soon as Mr. Patterson made these discoveries he concluded that his friend had been poisoned.

"He came to me, and he desires us to investigate the matter.

"I placed all these facts in File No. 1161, and you know as much as I do."

"It is a remarkable case."

"And it will be a difficult one to investigate.

"If Professor Ellsworth had died a few days ago it would not be so hard, but he has been dead over six months."

"Yes, and by this time the body no doubt is badly decomposed."

"It must be exhumed."

"Certainly."

"Well, I give you full charge of the matter; go ahead."

"Where is Mrs. Ellsworth now?"

"I don't know—neither does Patterson."

"Humph!"

"You'd better go and call on Patterson."

"I intend to do so."

Adam Grice left the inspector's office.

He had surely been given a difficult assignment.

There might be nothing in the case.

A mountain might have been manufactured out of a mole hill.

Grice knew what country gossip was.

It was not to be relied upon.

Some one might have started the rumors about Mrs. Ellsworth through spite.

These rumors had had six months in which to grow.

Thus the detective reasoned as he wended his way towards the broker's office.

He had known Professor Ellsworth and his wife, and his sister had attended their academy.

From what he had seen and heard of the couple he had always considered them estimable people.

No wonder Grice was perplexed.

He was uneasy in his mind.

Mr. Patterson was in his office when Grice entered.

His statement was clear and concise, and from him the detective learned very little more than had been submitted to him by the chief inspector.

The broker said that the name of the servant who had worked for the Ellsworths was Tillie Vane, and that she resided with her mother at Morris Dock.

"Mr. Grice," Mr. Patterson said as he concluded his statement, "I feel confident that my friend was murdered."

"I will probe the matter to the bottom," the detective rejoined.

CHAPTER II.

Grice experienced no difficulty in finding the abode of Tilly Vane.

The girl was at her mother's house, which was situated a short distance from the railroad station.

She was bright and intelligent.

When she learned the object of the detective's visit she expressed a willingness to tell everything she knew about the Ellsworths.

She conducted Grice into the sitting room.

As soon as they were seated she said:

"I worked at the academy for over a year."

"I desire you to try and recall all that happened," Grice remarked. "It is important that I should know the smallest details."

"One night last May there came to the academy a man who called himself Lino Amalio Espor y Mina.

"He said his father was the Governor of Santa Clara in Mexico.

"He asked to stay all night, and the professor permitted him to do so.

"I could not understand distinctly what he said, but Mrs. Ellsworth, who could speak Spanish, understood him.

"He had on a light suit and he looked like a tramp.

"After dinner he told a curious story.

"He said he came from Santa Fe de Bogota; his father sent him to France with a doctor; the doctor died in a church in Paris with a fit; at the hotel the officials took his trunk, which had a good deal of money in it, and the doctor's, too. He managed to get money enough to pay his passage to New York, where he expected to find a friend who would assist him. His friend lived near Morris Dock, but unfortunately he had discovered that he had gone on a trip to California.

"I didn't believe the man's story one bit, but Mrs. Ellsworth seemed to become infatuated with him immediately.

"Days passed.

"Mina still remained at the academy.

"He had one of the finest rooms in the house, and he and Mrs. Ellsworth were together very often.

"He used to have attacks, which he called fits.

"When he had them coming on Mrs. Ellsworth would send us all out of the room.

"I do not believe Mina ever had fits at all.

"Sometimes he would lie still and sometimes not.

"He would get up and walk about, throw his hands in the air and shout out in Spanish.

"Mrs. Ellsworth did not treat her husband right.

"After Mina came she treated him like a dog.

"He was a very meek man and she had a high temper.

"I used to think he was afraid of her.

"Mina and Mrs. Ellsworth used to ride out together alone.

"After a time he acted as if he owned the place.

"Then he got new clothes, and I understand Mrs. Ellsworth paid for them.

"I told Mrs. Ellsworth that she ought not to have anything to do with Mina because he was a Spaniard.

"She said she was going to teach him English, and that he was going to pay her two thousand dollars a year.

"She considered him a fine young man.

"Once they went to New York on a Monday and they did not come back till Wednesday night.

"Mr. Ellsworth was dreadfully uneasy about their going away.

"He told me he was really afraid there would be murder on his own side or on Mina's.

"I never heard the professor upbraid his wife.

"A number of times I saw Mrs. Ellsworth kiss the Spaniard.

"Some times when Mina had fits Mrs. Ellsworth would be up with him all night.

"I can hardly describe these spells.

"They were very queer."

"Didn't you have a quarrel with Mrs. Ellsworth?" Grice asked.

"No."

"Who did the cooking?"

"I did."

"You say Mina looked like a tramp?"

"He was very dirty—but quite handsome."

"Did you ever see Mrs. Ellsworth teach Mina?"

"No."

"She always tried to make me believe that he was a very distinguished man in his own country, and very wealthy. He was going to give her lots of diamonds."

"Was no attempt made by Mina to communicate with his relatives?"

"I believe the professor wrote letters, but I don't know to whom they were written.

"Mina undertook several times to be fresh with me and I gave him a pretty good beating with the broom, driving him out of the kitchen."

"Wasn't you just a little jealous of Mrs. Ellsworth?"

"No, sir! do you think I'd care for a Spaniard? No, sir—"

"I beg your pardon."

"It isn't necessary, Mr. Grice. I understand you; my story seems incredible to you, and you think that I am actuated through either pique about something or spite in telling it, but if you think this you are mistaken."

"Were you present when the professor died?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did he say?"

"He complained of a misery at his stomach—it appeared to him very much like fire—he told me that he could not stand it long.

"I made chicken soup for him and Mrs. Ellsworth took it up to him.

"She brought some of it back to the kitchen and she ordered me to throw it out.

"I obeyed orders."

"Was the professor sensible every time you saw him?"

"Yes, except the night he died."

"Did he die in agony?"

"Yes, great."

"When did you leave the house?"

"The day after the funeral."

"Wasn't there a doctor present when the professor died?"

"Yes, Dr. Tarnsworth."

"Did no one eat of the chicken soup except the professor?"

"No; Mrs. Ellsworth said she wanted it all for him."

Grice instructed the girl to keep silent about their interview, and departed.

He next called upon Dr. Tarnsworth.

He desired to secure the physician's statement.

It appeared to him that Tillie Vane was honest, and that she had told a straight story.

Dr. Tarnsworth was a middle-aged man, and he, like Mr. Patterson, expressed a desire to have the case investigated, because, if a crime had been committed, he realized that he had been deceived.

"I was the professor's physician," he said in reply to Grice's question.

"Although I saw him in his last illness first and last, yet I saw very little of him.

"The greater portion of what I did see of his case was ten or twelve hours before his death; when he was unable to give me a history of his feeling or sufferings.

"On the night he died I called about nine o'clock at the house and I was astonished to find the professor in articulo mortis.

"His extremities were cold and clammy; his pulse creeping and barely perceptible; his skin appeared to be collapsed or shrunken; his hearing entirely gone, which I was particularly struck with; his countenance evinced a good deal of anxiety and he seemed desirous to know whether he should or should not recover.

"His senses were so far impaired that I could not make him sensible of what my opinion was.

"I wrote on a slate, and even then I could not make him understand.

"An hour before he died he appeared very calm and expired in rather a comatose state."

"Was Mrs. Ellsworth in the room?" Grice asked.

"She and Mina were both there.

"I was not perfectly satisfied as to the cause of death but then I could see nothing suspicious, and I made out the certificate."

"How did Mrs. Ellsworth act?"

"I saw no want of tenderness on her part.

"There was nothing in her conduct at that time unbecoming a wife."

"Have you had any experience in poisoning cases?"

"No."

"You are aware of the discoveries Mr. Patterson has made?"

"I am."

"Suppose arsenic had been administered to the professor?"

"It would, I think, have accounted for some of the symptoms, and now I am not prepared to say it would not account for all. And still I am not prepared to say that natural causes and natural disease might not produce the same symptoms. No symptoms can give any stronger evidence of poison than probability.

"If I had had the slightest suspicion that anything was wrong, I should have turned the case over to the coroner for an investigation."

"How did Mina act?"

"Like a good, kind friend."

"Who was the undertaker?"

"Jim Plover. He resides across the street."

"Have you had any conversation with him in regard to the appearance of the body?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Mr. Patterson thought it would be best to wait and let the detective who should take hold of the case question him."

"I am going to see him."

"Do so."

"Then I will have the body exhumed and a specialist from New York will examine it."

Grice found the undertaker, who was quite a loquacious man.

"I laid out the professor," Plover said after the detective had told him the reason why he had called upon him. "The Spaniard helped him. There was a bruise on the right side of the body, and when I pointed it out to Mina he said it had been occasioned by a fall. There was another bruise upon the left knee and one on the right shoulder. All those marks I called the Spaniard's attention to.

"The neck was a little bent and there were purple marks about the ears.

"Mina seemed to be greatly affected and he cried.

"After death the professor's face became dark.

"The body was very stiff, and I was surprised at it."

This was all Plover could tell Grice, and the detective hurried back to New York.

He called upon a great specialist with whom he was acquainted and got him to accompany him to

the cemetery in which the body of Professor Ellsworth had been buried.

The body was exhumed and taken to the Harlem Hospital, where the specialist immediately proceeded to make an examination.

Grice did not remain while the doctor was at work.

He went down to police headquarters and held a long consultation with Inspector Byrnes.

Everything hinged on the report of the physician.

That was to be made that evening.

In the meantime Grice laid his plans for active work in case the specialist should discover that the professor had been poisoned.

At eight o'clock the detective called at his friend's house and he was conducted immediately into his presence.

A glance at the physician's face informed Grice that an important discovery had been made.

The doctor invited him to be seated.

"Adam," he remarked, "this is a very serious affair."

I concluded as much," the detective rejoined, sinking back into his chair and preparing to listen to the specialist's explanation.

He showed not the least sign of excitement, but he was convinced that Professor Ellsworth had been murdered. A slight silence followed, and the doctor said:

"Professor Ellsworth's death was caused by arsenic poisoning, and I have the positive proofs of it."

"Then it is a murder case after all," Grice ejaculated.

CHAPTER III.

On the south side of Washington square there stood an old-fashioned house, which, from its exterior appearance, one would have judged was older than the republic.

With its history we have nothing to do, suffice it to say that it had been inhabited for years by artists.

Many a tragedy and romance had been enacted in its rooms, and if its old walls could have spoken, they would have had strange tales to tell.

Among the initiated it was known as The Rookery, and the artists who had their studios in it were dubbed by their friends the Rooks.

Many of the Rooks were eccentrics—old crusty fellows—some failures, other successes; men whose pictures hung on the line at the academy exhibitions, and then, too, there were tenants in the building who were not artists—men and women who lived by their wits, who posed as Bohemians, many of whom could be found in the mixed assemblage at Maria del Prato's place on Twelfth street on a Saturday night.

The front door of The Rookery was never locked and no rules governed the coming and going of the tenants.

It was liberty hall.

No questions were asked about one's antecedents, and no complaint was made about the rackets and noises raised within the sacred portals of one's own room or suite of rooms.

It was about nine o'clock in the evening in which Adam Grice learned from the analyst that Professor Ellsworth had died from arsenic poisoning that two men crossed Washington square and entered The Rookery.

They entered the rooms on the right side of the hall on the first floor.

They were real antiques in appearance.

The vandal had not attempted to change them by modernizing.

Cheerful fires blazed on the hearths.

No carpets decked the floors, which were solid mahogany and therefore not unhandsome when clean and well oiled.

Against the whitewashed walls were cunningly arranged broad plates of rare Delft, Dresden and Ferole, and metal plaques, as bright as silver, which served in place of mirrors.

In a corner of the rear apartment stood an old grandfather's clock of Dutch ancestry, which marked the hours by many a weary tone, contrasting agreeably with the hour glass beside it in silent operation.

The huge square chimney frames with their sable front started out into the room to the distance of at least six feet.

In a deep recess in each room was stationed an enormous wardrobe of mahogany inlaid with ebony.

Instead of ceilings in the apartments of the old

mansion large oaken beams formed an imposing canopy, and these were adorned with rugs, furs, Indian curios, implements of the fisher and fowler, discarded pipes, empty wine bottles, and a hundred-and-one articles too numerous to describe.

This was Sam Tilman's studio, and it was he who had entered with the companion who had crossed the square with him.

Tilman was an illustrator.

He had been a tenant in The Rookery for nearly ten years.

In bohemian circles he was well known.

His air was naturally proud and dignified, but was so softened by that pleasing humanity which is the genuine offspring of a generous heart as to coincidence perfectly with the expression of good nature that beamed in his countenance, while his dark brown locks, parted from his smooth, white forehead, were thick and bushy.

Usually his cheek was pale, but this evening it wore the glow of youth, as he turned from the mantel on which he had lighted a dozen candles, and invited his companion to be seated.

In age Tilman was not over forty.

With a great degree of refinement, and living as he had nearly all his life in studios in New York and abroad, women had few attractions for him.

His companion, tall, thin and wiry, with straight black hair and tawny skin, appeared in violent contrast to him, as he sank down into a steamer chair, over which a buffalo robe was flung, lighted a cigarette and proceeded to puff on it, inhaling the smoke into his lungs, and driving it out through his nostrils.

Some might have considered him distingue, but he was blessed with a countenance of unblushing assurance, and upon it was a fine expression like that seen upon the faces of the pictures of the old Spanish Corsairs.

There was the air of the man-about-town about him, he was dressed exquisitely and a student of human nature making an estimate of him would have been inclined to think that he lived by ways and means which no one could explain.

To nearly every one Eugene Dupre was a mystery.

He had a French name and a Spanish accent.

He claimed to be a native of France, but what part he never mentioned.

Six months before the opening of my story Dupre had made his debut in the Tenderloin resorts.

He was always well supplied with money, and he soon made a score of acquaintances.

Sam Tilman first met him at the White Elephant, which was a sporting resort on Broadway near Thirtieth street, and after that he came into contact with him at various table d'hotes.

Dupre had an expressive face and Tilman desired to sketch it, and it was for this reason he first invited Dupre to call at his studio.

After that they dined together frequently.

This evening Tilman had met Dupre at Maria's, and after dinner he invited him to accompany him to his studio.

Tilman was never curious or prying.

He did not know a thing about Dupre's history, although he had been acquainted with him several months.

He was reticent about speaking of himself, and he respected the silence of others.

In Bohemia it is not expedient to be too curious about the history of people one meets with.

Tilman filled his large meerschaum pipe with tobacco, lit it, and then threw himself down upon a broad divan, under a canopy formed of Turkish rugs.

For some time both of the men smoked in silence, Tilman enveloping his form in a cloud of azure and uttering grunt after grunt of satisfaction as he sucked away on the stem of the pipe and blew the smoke in rings up over his head.

Dupre handled his cigarette daintily and assumed a languid and indolent air.

His eyelids were partly closed, but through the long, black lashes he cast an occasional glance toward the artist.

A peculiar feature about him was his eyes, which were as black as night.

They had a magnetic glitter, which was snake-like in its penetration.

It was not soft and poetic like that of most men of his caste.

His hands were long, sinewy, and the large joints showed that the fingers possessed great strength.

The finger nails had a pinkish hue like one sees in the nails of the mulatto or octaroon.

An ethnologist would have said that Dupre had a tinge of negro blood in his veins.

And probably he would have been correct in his estimate, because there were other unmistakable signs of negro tinge about the man.

Tilman did not notice the furtive glances of his companion.

He seemed to be lost in a revery contemplating the half-finished picture of a nude nymph which was resting upon an easel at the end of the room.

The face of the picture was exquisite in all its outlines—it was that of a very beautiful woman.

Perhaps the artist was thinking of the model, and then again he might have been dreaming of some poetic fancy which he intended to weave into the painting.

Whatever his thoughts were he gave no expression to them.

So deep was he in the revery that Dupre had to speak to him three times before he was able to attract his attention.

"I beg your pardon!" Tilman ejaculated, removing the pipe stem from between his lips, and straightening up, when at last he heard Dupre call his name. "What did you say?" he asked as he looked at his companion, who was now bending forward with his elbows resting upon his knees.

"You were dreaming!" Dupre replied with a low laugh, and he displayed his pearl white teeth between his bright red lips. "Wool gathering, eh?"

"I believe I was musing."

"About that picture?" nodding his head and casting a glance toward the painting.

"Yes and no——"

Dupre laughed immoderately, threw himself back into the chair and took a long puff on his cigarette, knocking off the ashes with the tip of his little finger.

"I often lose myself in a revery like that," Tilman added with extreme good nature.

"You artists are peculiar," Dupre rejoined.

"I acknowledge it. But what was the question you asked me?"

"I asked you if you knew a man by the name of Adam Grice."

"Is he a detective?"

"Yes."

"Why, yes, certainly I know Adam. I have been acquainted with him for a number of years."

"He used to be a newspaper reporter and he and I worked together on the same paper."

"He is a rattling good fellow and he has not got a mean bone in his body."

"He is the best man on Inspector Byrnes' staff."

"Have you ever met him?"

"No."

"Somebody has been speaking to you about him?"

"Yes; a friend of mine told me to-day that he is an expert in murder cases."

"Your friend told you the truth."

"Then he is a dangerous man to have on one's trail."

"If I had committed a crime I should dread to have Adam Grice on my trail."

"He sticks to a case closer than a leech until he succeeds in fathoming the mystery."

"I do not believe he has failed in one case he has undertaken."

"The ability of most of these detectives is over-rated."

"Adam Grice's ability is not over-rated, though."

"I know what he is capable of performing."

"You admire him?"

"I do."

"Does he ever come here to see you?"

"Frequently."

"He was here last Thursday evening and spent several hours with me."

"Is he at work on any case now?"

"I suppose he is. I don't know. He never talks about his work. One can never learn from Adam what he is doing. It is only on rare occasions he will talk and then only when he desires to secure some information."

"Where does he live?"

"You do not know?"

"That is the truth. Grice keeps his lodging place a secret. It is necessary for him to do so."

"Then he is a sort of a mystery."

"Not at all."

"Is he afraid?"

"No, no. Adam Grice is afraid of no one——"

"Then he ought not to live under cover as you say he does."

"You don't understand, Dupre."

"I think I do."

"No, you do not; if Grice's abode were known then the crooks whom he is forced to track would be able to watch him, follow him, and perhaps be able to thwart his plans."

"He does just what I would do if I were following his profession."

"He is an adept at disguising himself."

"That is nothing great. Any one with a little practice can disguise himself so that his most intimate friends would not recognize him."

"Well——"

"Hark!"

"Did some one knock on the door?"

"I thought I heard a knock."

"Yes. There it is again."

Tilman sprang up off the divan, and with pipe in hand he crossed the room.

He opened the door and Adam Grice entered the studio.

"By jingo!" Tilman ejaculated as he shook hands with the detective. "We were just talking about you, Adam. Here, let me introduce you to my friend, Mr. Eugene Dupre. This is Grice, and you can see what kind of a man he is."

"I thought some one was talking about me," Grice remarked as he shook hands with Dupre and then sat down, "my left ear has been burning all the evening. I suppose Sam has been damning me as usual"—glancing at Dupre and scrutinizing him closely, making an estimate of his character, and instantly deciding in his mind that he did not like the man.

"On the contrary," Dupre replied, "he has been praising you up to the nines."

"And giving you the idea that I am a marvel, no doubt."

"Nothing of the kind," Tilman expostulated.

"Oh, I know you of old, Sam."

They all laughed and Dupre suddenly rose from his chair, remarking:

"I must go, now, Tilman. I have an appointment up town."

"Don't let me drive you away," Grice said.

"You are not. I was just about to depart when you came in. I'm pleased to have met you, Mr. Grice. I hope to see you again soon. I should like to remain and talk with you, but I promised to meet a friend at ten o'clock and I must hurry away."

As the door closed behind Dupre Grice exclaimed:

"I'm glad that fellow went because I want to talk with you about something I desire you to do for me, Sam."

"I am at your service," Tilman replied as he sat down in the chair which Dupre had vacated.

"I knew you would say that."

"What do you think of Dupre?"

"I don't like him."

"That's just like you."

"Is he a particular friend of yours? If he is, why——"

"He is not a particular friend of mine, but I have been acquainted with him for some time."

"I suppose he is some fellow whom you met at Maria's or some other resort."

"Exactly. You have hit the nail on the head. I first met him at Maria's place."

"What do you know about him?"

"Nothing."

"Ah, Sam, take care; some day you will get into a peck of trouble through some one of these chance acquaintances about whom you know nothing."

They both laughed and for a time they were silent.

CHAPTER IV.

Professor Whithaus, the great analyst, explained to the detective how he had made an analysis of the stomach and its contents, and how he had discovered indisputable evidence of arsenic poisoning.

A crime had been committed.

It was six months old.

Would it be possible now to secure evidence which would convict the guilty party or parties?

What was the motive for the crime?

Who inspired it?

Were Mrs. Ellsworth and the man Mina the murderers?

Grice was silent in thought for some time after Professor Whithaus completed his statement.

Never before in all his experience had such a complicated problem been presented to him.

While he thought over the different phases of the case thus far revealed the idea occurred to him that Professor Ellsworth might have taken the poison himself.

He no doubt had learned that his wife thought more of Mina than she did of him; he was of a sensitive temperament; he may have become despondent and determined to end his life.

Grice recalled the statement made by Tillie Vane, the servant, in regard to Mrs. Ellsworth's absence from home with Mina and what the professor had said to her at the time; if the state of affairs continued it would end in the death of either Mina or himself.

Did Ellsworth mean by this that he would either kill the Spaniard or make way with himself?

Who could tell?

At this moment the detective was not prepared to say which was the correct theory.

He made up his mind to try and discover who had purchased the arsenic.

This would be a difficult task and at this late day Grice had very little hope of being able to find out where the poison had been purchased and by whom.

There was only one drug store at Morris Dock.

If the poison had not been purchased at this store then a long search must be undertaken.

Would it be worth while to waste time in such a search?

If either Mina or Mrs. Ellsworth had bought the drug with the intention of committing the crime, then they would have been likely to have used an assumed name when they signed the poison book kept by the druggist from whom they purchased the drug.

If they had plotted the crime they would take every precaution to cover up their tracks so that no evidence would exist against them.

Grice's clear mentality showed him that it would be expedient to let the search in that direction rest until all other efforts to secure evidence had failed.

He would question the druggist at Morris Dock and if he were unable to learn anything from him he would go no further just now in the search for the store at which the poison had been bought.

Just as the detective reached this conclusion the professor, who had been watching him for some time, said:

Grice, are you acquainted with a first-class artist?"

"Yes, I am," the detective replied, starting up out of his reverie. "What do you want an artist for?"

"I want him to paint a number of water colors of the intestines and the stomach of the deceased, so that this exact condition can be shown."

"I am acquainted with the very man who can do the work."

"Can you see him to-night and get him to call upon me to-morrow morning?"

"Yes."

"Who is he?"

"His name is Samuel Tilman."

"I have heard of him."

"He is an excellent artist."

"I have seen some of his paintings at the Academy exhibitions."

"I'll go down to his studio now."

"Where is it?"

"In The Rookery."

"On Washington Square, south?"

"Yes."

Grice arrived at the studio half an hour after he left Professor Whithaus' house.

He explained to Tilman what he wanted him to do, and the artist agreed to undertake the work, under the direction of Professor Whithaus.

He did not tell his friend, however, anything about the case.

cause he knew that if Grice desired him to know anything he would have told him.

As soon as the arrangements were completed the detective, who had been inspecting the half-completed picture resting upon the easel, said:

"That is a mighty fine conception, Sam. Who is the model?"

"She is a young woman with a romantic history," the artist replied.

"What is her name?"

"Anita Posset."

"How long have you known her?"

"About a year."

"And she has been your model for that length of time and I have never met her?"

"She is not an ordinary model."

"Hello! Not an ordinary model, eh?"

"She poses for no one except me."

"Humph!"

Grice gazed at his friend with a quizzical expression.

Tilman noticed it and laughed, remarking:

"You think there is something in it?"

"No, no, my boy," Grice rejoined. "I know your heart is as hard as flint and no woman, no matter how beautiful she may be, can move you."

"That is where you are mistaken, Adam. That woman has moved me——"

"What?"

"I am telling you the truth."

"Are you in love with her?"

"No—not exactly."

"Then what?"

"I am unable to describe my feelings accurately. Perhaps you would like to hear her story. I have a premonition that I ought to tell it to you, and that in some way she is to become strangely entangled in our lives."

"Wait one moment until I fill a pipe and then I'll listen to you. Here, hand me that Yale mixture."

Tilman passed the tobacco box over to his friend, who filled the pipe, which he had taken down from the mantelpiece, lit it, settled back in the chair and ejaculated:

"Now fire ahead, my boy."

The artist also "fired up" and after he had drawn a few whiffs from his comforter said:

"Anita Posset is a creole."

"She was born in Havana and at a very early age she was married to a rich Spanish planter, who was old enough to be her grandfather."

"This is what she has told you?" Grice interpolated.

"Yes."

"Go on."

"This union was in opposition to her taste."

"Such unions always are to beautiful young creoles."

"Now you are sarcastic, but I'll bear with you."

"Don't feel offended, my boy. It is only my way."

Anita's husband was a man of an infinity of wit, but who had been deceived, as was at that time the case, with a great many men in Cuba who were working under cover for the independence of the island, and who were wrought up against the false splendor with which they were surrounded in the circle of the Captain-General's cabinet in the capital.

"It seems that he devoted himself heart and soul to the secret propagation of revolutionary doctrines, and the progressive development of a system of philosophy of which Henry George was the exponent, and he advocated the establishment of a form of taxation in Cuba which would prevent the land owners from holding land out of use for speculative purposes, and which would give to the common people, the peasantry, an opportunity to work the land for themselves, and raise enough therefrom for their own subsistence, without being forced as they were, and have always been, to be the slaves of the landed proprietors."

"He could not have been a bad sort of a fellow—if he did that."

"No, but he overwhelmed his wife with bitter raileries of what he termed her superstition, and he tried to train her mind so that she would understand his doctrines."

"But Anita was a royalist; she was not a thinker; she believed in the doctrines taught by her church and the clergy, and it seemed not possible that the purity and integrity of her faith could suffer any attain or diminution."

while there her mind commenced to awaken, and her old religious convictions were in some degree impaired."

"I can imagine what the result was."

"Wait; don't anticipate me, let me tell the story."

"Certainly."

"Anita's principles were acquired rather than instinctive, the result of chance and accident rather than conviction and reason."

"She is endowed with quick, futile and ardent imagination, which had been inflamed by the splendrous exterior of Catholicism and its mysterious, grave and majestic ceremonies."

"She had experienced nothing of religion but its poetry."

"Her soul was enraptured while her senses were intoxicated by the inspiring perfume of the incense and the distant solemn and murmured melody of the music."

"And so when her husband had laid siege to her spiritualized faith she shuddered, she was incapable of reply or argument."

"She encountered nothing but cold and heartless reasoning, until finally she was almost convinced of the hollowness of that system to which she had clung."

"It must have been a terrible struggle for her."

"It is a struggle for every mind which awakens from the clouds of superstition and error."

"The cruel and brutal demon of analysis had stained with its withering breath her ravishing visions of azure skies, and smiling heavens, peopled with angels and rainbow wings, and breathing with divine melody—all soon disappeared like the vision of first and only love."

"You are poetic, Sam."

"Anita's mind was awakened."

"Like a fired soul, she threw off the yoke."

"Her life assumed a different aspect and took on another coloring."

"Her heart beat with life."

"Hitherto she had escaped the influence of earthly passions, but now if her burning soul, fallen from so high a flight, desired to indulge in emotions, they could only be found or felt in love—for love is a religion and has its faith and creed—and in Anita's case it was more particularly so, for if she had given herself up to the passion she would have loved with an absolute surrender of self, with a fierce and implacable jealousy, which would have devoted to love what she would have otherwise sacrificed to heaven—rank, future, everything."

"But she did not love her husband; she had grown to respect him, though, and she was too much of a woman to excite in her heart an unworthy passion—and thus she remain unscathed."

"Around her she saw in the depths of society thousands suffering under injustice, thousands struggling for liberty and against oppression, and she yearned to help them."

"Frankly she told her desires to her husband, and he was elated."

"Both of them became members of the European revolutionary societies—they helped the Nihilists in Russia and the Socialists in Spain."

"Anita developed into an eloquent speaker, a fierce, uncompromising enemy of royalty and the rich, and she spent thousands in the promulgation of the doctrines. She was now more advanced in her ideas than her husband, and the pupil led the preceptor, who followed with blind confidence."

"While in St. Petersburg Posset died, and this left Anita at liberty, a young widow, and with an immense fortune."

"After Posset's death Anita became connected with Sophia Petroviska and her sister Maria."

"By jingo!"

"What's the matter?"

"I thought that face was familiar," pointing to the painting. "You have idealized it—"

"Do you know Anita Posset?"

"I know no one by the name of Anita Posset, but I do know something about a young woman by the name of Anita Gonzales, who was an associate of the Petroviskas, who saved Sophia's sister from death—escaped with her from Russia after the assassination of the Czar and who was known to the Nihilists as Maria Jabowowska, and whose description tallies with that of your model."

"You don't know anything bad about her?"

"No; what I know about her is good."

"I am glad to hear you say that. I was afraid that you would depict her as a scheming woman."

"No, I was not aware of her early history until now, but I did know that she was rich and an enthusiastic Nihilist. I suppose you remember, Sam, when I was a member of the Nihilist group in this city with Girboyadoff, Schivitch and several others who had bound themselves together to help the struggling students who were fighting against the despotism of the Czar."

"Well, I should say so. Wasn't I a member of the group at the same time?"

"Why, sure; I had forgotten that."

"Other newspaper men besides ourselves were members."

"In fact the whole group were newspaper men and artists."

"This is strange."

For a few moments the friends lapsed into silence, each recalling to his mind many strange incidents of the past, until finally Tilman asked:

"Where did you first meet Anita?"

"In Amsterdam."

"I was sent over by the group to assist in the escape of Maria Petroviska from Europe."

"I met the women in Amsterdam."

"I took them to Paris. There Mrs. Gonzales left us. She started for Cuba and I brought Sophia's sister to New York."

"Three years ago I heard that Mrs. Gonzales was assisting the revolutionists in Spain."

"I was not aware that she was in New York."

"She has been living quietly here for over a year."

"Where did you first meet her?"

"Sophia's sister introduced us. She called her Anita Posset. If she had mentioned the Russian name I might have recalled who she was."

"Then she has not told you that she is living here under an assumed name?"

"No."

"And she has told you her whole history?"

"Nearly all of it."

"How much longer will it take you to tell the rest of it to me?"

"Ten minutes more."

"Go ahead. I'm deeply interested now. I can spare the time."

"After leaving Sophia's sister Anita spent several years in her native isle."

"Among the revolutionists she met a man who seemed to be an enthusiast like herself."

"He appeared to be struggling under some profound sorrow."

"His ingenious countenance touched Anita's heart and she felt a pity for and a strong interest in him."

"From that period a new existence commenced for her."

"She felt an unknown sensation inspiring her at the sight of him."

"His features seemed to haunt her wherever she went and his voice constantly thrilled her soul."

"She was very happy in the newly discovered sensation, and she made no effort to resist its progress."

"She was rich, and what obstacle was there to prevent her devoting herself to this man?"

"She understood now the throbbings, the desires, of love."

"The more she came in contact with the man the more she loved him."

"And he spent hours with her pouring into her ears the sweetest music she had ever listened to."

"At length such a deep, burning and concentrated passion took possession of her heart and soul that she could not refuse any one of her lover's desires."

"At her age the development of such a feeling is impetuous and uncontrollable."

"To her eyes her lover was beautiful, brave and talented, and she could see no man who could be compared to him."

"She believed that he loved her to adoration, notwithstanding the fact that her friend, General Gomez, warned her against him."

"You, no doubt, have surmised the result—Anita became the wife of the man she loved."

"A week after the marriage her husband's whole conduct changed."

"He made a demand on her for a large sum of money, which he said he intended to devote to the cause."

"She gave it to him."

"He disappeared and she did not see him again for a month."

"She was almost heart broken."

"When her husband returned to her he made another demand for money."

"Then the scales fell from her eyes."

"She discovered that she had married a villain."

"Her health became affected—she grew thin and her cheeks were stained by the channels of involuntary tears; without aid, consolation or refuge against this painful sorrow, and the nervous excitement which preyed upon and worried her, the thought of death was the only pleasing idea which visited her, and she sometimes even thought of hastening its approach; but whether her courage failed her or a secret presentiment withheld her, she continued to linger in this unhappy state and suffered from the cruelty of the scoundrel, whom she now loathed."

"Suddenly she became aware that her husband was trying to kill her by giving her small doses of arsenic."

"This aroused the fury of a tigress within her breast. She made up her mind to have the rascal arrested and punished after she had accumulated the evidence against him."

"Just then a woman visited her in her home at Matanzas—Anita's husband was with her at the time—the woman denounced him and said that she was his only wife. The rascal fled, taking with him all of Anita's jewels and three thousand dollars in gold."

"Anita investigated the woman's story and found it to be true."

"She set officers on the rascal's track, but they failed to run him to cover."

"Several attempts were made by mysterious assassins to kill her and she was convinced that they had been inspired by the man who had deceived and robbed her."

"Cuba was not safe for her."

"Then Anita disguised herself and escaped from the country, coming direct to New York."

"Here she has been ever since."

"After I met her quite a friendship sprang up between us."

"I asked her to pose for me and she consented."

"Did she tell you the name of the man who deceived her?"

"Yes; it is Lino Amalio Espor y Mina."

"Gee, whiz!" and Grice sprang up out of his chair as if he had received an electric shock."

Tilman started up also and viewed his friend with surprise, thinking he had been seized with a fit."

CHAPTER V.

"What is the matter, Adam?" the artist asked with deep concern."

"Nothing much," the detective replied, and duly recovering his composure."

"I like that—you almost have a fit and then you say nothing is the matter."

"What reason have you to express such surprise at the mention of the name of the man who deceived Anita?"

Tilman fastened his eyes upon Grice, who did not answer immediately, but stood in the centre of the room with head bowed in deep thought."

"Sit down, Sam," the detective finally said, resuming his seat, and then when his friend had followed his example he continued: "I know I can trust you—"

"You can, Adam," the artist interrupted."

"I am going to communicate to you something which I desire you to hold as a profound secret."

"I will."

"You may be able to assist me in the investigation I am now making."

"Then you are working on a case—I surmised as much—"

"I am at work on a very complicated affair."

"A mystery?"

"Yes—murder."

"And a man by the name of Lino Amalio Espor y Mina is connected with it?"

"Yes."

"And you believe that he and the man who deceived Anita are one and the same person?"

"I am not sure."

"Let me hear the story."

Grice related all the incidents connected with the death of Professor Ellsworth."

Tilman listened with close attention."

He made no comment until the detective concluded and then he said."

"It is indeed a strange case—the man Mina who was, and probably is now, connected with Mrs. Ellsworth may be the rascal who deceived Anita—"

"Yes," Grice replied, "and then again the chances are he may not be the man—Mina may not be his name."

"People at Morris Dock will be able to identify him?"

"Yes—quite a number—"

"I will see Anita and ask her if she has in her possession a picture of Mina—if she has not I will request her to make a drawing of his face. She will be able to do it because she is an artist. You can take this drawing or picture and show it to the servant girl who worked for the Ellsworths—"

"When will you see Anita?"

"She will be here to-morrow morning at nine o'clock."

"I'll call at that time. I should like to have a talk with her."

"Grice, you will have to see her here—when I said that I would see her, I forgot that I had agreed to go to Professor Whithaus's to make those water colors."

"You must be at Whithaus' house on time. I also forgot about that engagement. I'll see Anita."

"What—you are not going?"

Grice had risen from his chair and he replied:

"Yes. I must leave now. I've got an engagement with a man up-town."

"I thought you'd bunk here with me for the night," Tilman said in a tone of disappointment."

"I should like to, my boy, but I can't."

"I'll see you to-morrow?"

"Yes."

"At what time?"

"I can't tell."

"After I get through at Whithaus's I'll come here and remain until you arrive."

"Don't do that—you need not put yourself out. I'll find you if I should happen to need you."

"Are you going to say anything to Anita about the case?"

"No. I'm simply going to question her about Mina."

Grice departed."

As he issued forth from The Rookery he was so busily engaged in thinking that he did not look either to the right or the left."

In this way he did not notice a man who was standing in the shadow of a large tree in front of the house next door to the studio building and he was not aware that this man started to follow him across the Square."

The detective was thinking that File No. 1161 was likely to prove a **cause celebre**.

He considered it remarkable that the name of Mina should crop up in such an unexpected manner, and he was anxious to discover if the man who had deceived Anita Posset was the same rascal whom the Professor had befriended."

Anita's Mina had attempted to poison her with arsenic."

His description tallied with that of the man who had lived with the Ellsworths."

"I must be content and wait until to-morrow," the detective mused as he passed under the Washington Arch."

If he had looked back he would have discovered that a tall man was only a few yards behind him."

People were sitting on the benches in the Square and others were passing up and down Fifth avenue."

The streets in the vicinity were not deserted and the man who was tracking Adam Grice would not dare to attack him as long as he remained on the main thoroughfare."

The detective walked up the avenue until he came to Twenty-third street, where he halted on the corner outside the branch office of the Herald and examined some notes in his **memorandum book**.

The man who was tracking him stepped in the doorway of one of the large buildings near the corner."

The theatres were just letting out and the streets in the neighborhood of Madison Square were alive with people and carriages."

Grice paid no attention to what was going on around him."

He glanced at his watch."

"It lacks ten minutes yet of the time," he muttered, and then he slowly crossed the street."

The man came out of the doorway and kept close on his trail."

The detective entered the cafe of the Hoffman House

and glanced around at the men who were seated at the tables.

He crossed the room instantly and shook hands with a large man who was sitting at a table in the corner.

"You are ahead of time, Mr. Beese," he remarked as he sat down.

"I just got in a minute ago," the man replied. "I was sorry I was out this afternoon when you called at my store to see me. I got your note, however—"

"And did you look up the information from your books?"

"I did."

"Have you it with you?"

"Yes."

"I shall be pleased to answer any questions you may ask, Mr. Grice."

"For how many years did you make Professor Ellsworth's clothes?"

"I can't say exactly—perhaps twenty years—"

Grice thought for a moment.

Mr. Beese had called a waiter and was giving an order for drinks and cigars.

He was a man of means and the owner of one of the most fashionable tailoring establishments on Fifth avenue.

All the swell chappies had their clothing made at Beese's.

Grice had learned that Professor Ellsworth had had Beese for his tailor and thinking he might learn something from the man he had called at his store to see him, and discovering that he was out he had left a card requesting him to meet him that night in the cafe of the Hoffman House.

The waiter placed the cigars and drinks in front of Grice and the tailor and as soon as he walked away the detective asked:

"Did Professor Ellsworth ever order clothing made for anyone besides himself?"

"Only for one person," Beese replied.

"When was that?"

"Last year."

"For whom did he give the order?"

"A man by the name of Lino Amalio Espor y Mina—and that fellow, Grice, I believe, was a swindler."

The detective expressed not the slightest surprise.

"I don't know what you want this information for," Beese continued, after taking a sip of wine, "but if that fellow Mina has swindled Mr. Ellsworth or anyone else I should not be surprised."

"Then you are not a friend of Don Lino?" the detective laughed.

"No."

"Does he owe you a bill?"

"Yes."

"You say that Professor Ellsworth ordered a suit of clothes for him last May?"

"It was May 16th Mrs. Ellsworth called at my store with Mina. She came two or three times afterward in company with him. On the first visit she told me that Professor Ellsworth desired me to make a suit for Mina, and that he would pay for it. At that time the fellow was dressed like a tramp and I was on pins and needles all the time he and Mrs. Ellsworth were in the store, for fear that some of my over-fastidious customers would come in and see him."

"I took his measure and he and Mrs. Ellsworth departed."

"Mrs. Ellsworth gave me at the time this order. You may read it."

Beese opened his pocketbook, took out a slip of paper and handed it to the detective, who proceeded to read it.

It was in the professor's handwriting.

"At the first visit Mrs. Ellsworth came into my store," Mr. Beese said, as the detective passed the order book to him, "she said she had a young man in her carriage who had been very unfortunate; he had no money, having lost upward of thirty thousand dollars somewhere in France."

"He wanted to go to see the Mexican Consul, but had not the suit fit to visit in."

"He desired to get the Consul to write immediately to his father, who was the Governor of Santa Clara."

"Mrs. Ellsworth said that a remittance was shortly expected from Lina's father, and as soon as the Consul got the remittance Mina would pay the professor, and he would pay me."

"I told her it would be all right."

As the detective read the clothes were finished

"Mrs. Ellsworth was pretty much the manager and her husband was inactive."

"After that first suit was taken away Mina commenced to order more clothes on Professor Ellsworth's account."

"I commenced to suspect that everything was not all right, and I went up to the Academy to see the professor."

"He was not at home."

"I saw Mrs. Ellsworth."

"I told her I thought Mina was a great scoundrel; that I had sent my young man to the Mexican Consul's to inquire about him; the Consul said he knew nothing of him, and knew neither him nor his father, and believed him to be an impostor."

"Mrs. Ellsworth appeared to be very much hurt at what I said. She became quite indignant and declared that the Consul had lied to my young man or had manufactured the story about Mina, claiming to have seen the Consul when he had not."

"I could see that Mrs. Ellsworth was infatuated with Mina."

"I left the Academy and as long as the professor and his wife stood responsible for Mina's bills I made the clothes."

"To satisfy myself in regard to Mina I called upon the Mexican Consul and made inquiries of him personally."

"He said the Governor of Santa Clara was Jose Martinez, a personal friend of his, and he knew that Lino was not his son."

"He said he was making inquiries about the man as he was convinced that he was an impostor."

"If I were you, Grice, I'd call upon the Mexican Consul."

"Probably I shall do so—"

"When was the last time you saw Mina?"

"The day after Professor Ellsworth died. He came into the store and asked me to make him a black suit."

"I told him that his bill was \$250 and if he paid it I would make the suit."

"He promised to settle the account the next day; he left the store and from that day to this I have not seen either him or Mrs. Ellsworth."

"I've made inquiries to try and discover where they are and no one seems to know what has become of them."

"A week after the professor died Mrs. Ellsworth disposed of the Academy through a real estate broker."

"The place was in her name."

"I'm greatly obliged to you for this information, Mr. Beese."

"Don't mention it."

"What has Mina done?"

"I can't tell you."

"Well, if you are looking for him I hope you'll catch him—that's all. He's a double dyed villain—I feel confident. And if that woman went away with him she was a fool. I'll bet he has run through with her money, or if he hasn't done so already, he will do it."

Grice and the tailor left the cafe and outside they separated.

The detective now had a clean insight into the character of the man whom the professor had befriended.

He started up Broadway.

The man who had followed him from The Rookery was still on his trail.

While in the cafe the man had sat at a table next to him.

His face was covered with a heavy black beard and he wore a black slouch hat.

His skin was swarthy and one glance would have been sufficient to have informed any one that he was a foreigner.

What was his object in following Grice?

From his black eyes there shot forth vindictive flashes as he studied every move made by the sleuth.

Grice reached Thirty-sixth street.

He turned the corner and entered a flat house in the middle of the block.

In the house he had a suite of rooms on the second floor.

The tracker remained outside.

He looked up at the front windows.

In all of them lights were shining except in the windows of the apartments occupied by the detective.

Soon the man on the outside saw a light appear in Grice's room, and he ejaculated:

"He lives here—ah—yes—it is he at the window pull—"

ing down the shade. It was not a hard matter to track him—"

Immediately he stepped into the vestibule, struck a match and read the names on the letter boxes.

On the letter box of Grice's apartment there was no name.

The man laughed.

There was a ring of triumph in his voice.

He entered the house and ascended the stairs to the second story.

Outside the door of Grice's room he paused.

Stooping down he peered through the keyhole.

He beheld the detective in the act of pulling off his coat.

Ten minutes passed.

The man kept his eye glued to the keyhole.

Grice turned out the light, and got into bed.

Then the man in the hall crept away from the front door.

He came up to the rear window, raised it cautiously and looked out.

At the side of the window opening into Grice's flat he beheld a fire escape and he gave a grunt of satisfaction.

It was easy now to divine the man's intentions.

He proposed to make an attempt to enter the detective's apartment.

For half an hour he stood at the window as silent as a statue.

No one passed up or down the stairs.

At last the man crawled out onto the fire escape.

He tried the window and found that it was locked.

This did not phase him.

From his finger he removed a diamond ring.

He cut out a pane of glass without making hardly any noise.

To shove his hand through the opening and snap back the catch was the work of a second, and then he softly pushed up the sash.

He crawled into the room.

With soft and stealthy footsteps he crossed the apartment, opened the door and entered the man's room.

CHAPTER VI.

Adam Grice dropped off to sleep a few moments after his head touched the pillow.

He was entirely unconscious of any impending danger.

The man who had entered the flat reached the room in which the detective was sleeping.

A small night lamp was burning on a dressing case in front of a cabinet clock and its dim light enabled the intruder to see.

The detective's loud and regular breathing and the ticking of the clock were the only noises which disturbed the silence.

The intruder paused for a moment in the doorway and made an inspection of the room.

A sinister expression twisted his lip and a cruel flash illumined his eyes.

From his vest pocket he drew forth a small bottle which contained a greenish liquid.

He cast a glance toward the sleeper.

Grice did not move.

He was lying upon his back.

One arm was thrown up over his head, while the other was extended by his side.

The intruder saturated a handkerchief with the contents of the bottle.

A sweet perfume like that of the extract of violets and bitter almonds blended filled the room.

The man drew near to the bed.

His movements were like those of a cat.

Not a sound did he make.

He bent over Grice and then spread the handkerchief over his face.

The detective gave a gasp.

Then a long drawn sigh.

But he did not stir.

The handkerchief remained spread over his face and the fumes from the drug were drawn into his lungs.

The intruder hurriedly withdrew from the side of the bed.

He walked out into the private hall.

Opening the door he reached the main hall and then made his way down to the street.

He did not slacken his pace until he came to the

corner of Broadway, where he paused, removed his hat and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

His hand shook violently.

"He cannot escape death," he muttered, as he put his hat back on his head. "He will inhale the fumes of that deadly Indian drug and in an hour he will be dead—"

He gave a cruel laugh.

Any one knowing what he had done and hearing what he said would have surmised that he was thinking of Adam Grice.

He seemed to be positive that the detective would die. The drug was a deadly narcotic used by East Indian assassins.

The man knew what effect the poison would have on a sleeper.

He must have used it before.

If he had not he would not have been so confident of what the result would be.

He did not calculate on anything happening to thwart his design.

He did not realize that anything could intervene to save the life of the detective.

Had he not placed the drug soaked handkerchief squarely over Grice's face?

The detective did not display any sign of being disturbed.

He had waited long enough by the bedside to hear the sleeper draw a long breath.

That appeared to convince him that the handkerchief would not be thrown off and the drug would do its horrible work.

Who was the fiend?—for fiend he was—one could not classify him as anything else.

What motive had he in desiring to put the detective out of the way?

He had a motive?

One could not doubt that.

For some cause he was afraid of Adam Grice.

Was he implicated in the case the detective was investigating?

He saw a policeman walking toward him and he moved away from the corner, crossing the street, and entering a saloon, where he bought a drink of whiskey.

While he was standing at the bar a strange occurrence was taking place in Adam Grice's bedroom.

The detective was the owner of a large Maltese cat, which he had raised from a kitten.

The cat slept in the kitchen of the flat, and Grice always locked it in before he retired for the night.

The intruder had left open the door between the kitchen and the dining room.

Puss found the door open.

A few minutes after the poisoner departed the Maltese entered the detective's bedroom.

It sprang up on to the bed.

Instinct seemed to tell it that there was something the matter with its master.

It commenced to mew loudly and then reaching forth a paw caught hold of the handkerchief and drew it off of Grice's face.

Still the detective showed no signs of awakening.

The cat licked his face and commenced to claw on his night shirt.

This continued for nearly five minutes.

A strong current of fresh air was wafted into the room.

The fumes of the drug were forced out of the apartment.

The Maltese buried its claws in the night shirt and gave a number of vigorous jerks.

Grice moved.

The cat gave a loud mew and continued to tug.

The detective sighed.

This seemed to encourage the cat and it mewed louder and louder, accompanying every mew with a tug on the front of the night shirt.

Grice opened his eyes.

His head swam.

He was about to close his eyes again when the cat dug its claws deep into his arm.

The sting aroused him.

He raised up in the bed with an angry exclamation and he threw the Maltese across the room with one sweep of his arm.

Then he sprang out of bed.

He felt nauseated.

he ejaculated, peering about the room. Just then he got a whiff of the aroma of the drug.

He turned on the electric light.

On the bed he beheld the handkerchief.

Lying upon the floor at the side of the bed he saw the half empty bottle, which had fallen out of the would-be assassin's vest pocket unobserved, as he bent over the sleeper.

The Maltese came up and rubbed its back against the bare legs of its master.

"Ah, Malty," Grice ejaculated, picking up the bottle and the handkerchief; "I used you cruelly and misjudged you. I owe my life to you."

He smelled of the drug and added:

"A narcotic—deadly—someone has been here and tried to kill me—instinct told the Maltese that my life was in danger; it pulled the handkerchief off my face and saved me."

Grice made a search of the flat.

He found the back window open and discovered the cut pane of glass lying on the fire escape.

He closed the window, nailed a board over the sash, and returned to the bedroom.

The cat followed him around like a faithful dog.

Grice's face wore a serious expression.

His mind was greatly disturbed.

He knew that someone had followed him to his lodgings and he felt chagrined.

This was the first night he had arrived at the flat without having on a disguise, and without taking the precaution to ascertain if anyone were following him before entering. But his mind had been busily engaged in considering the case, and he did not act with his usual caution.

"This will teach me a lesson," he muttered. "Now I must get out of here. I'll go up to my room on Fifty-fifth street. To-morrow I'll send one of the boys here and let him sell the furniture. It's lucky I keep all my clothing up-town. Well, my would-be assassin, I'll play you a double trick before long."

Grice dressed hurriedly.

He put the handkerchief and the bottle into his coat pocket, intending to examine them more closely later on.

In a few minutes he was carefully disguised.

Then taking the cat up under his arm he turned out the light and left the flat.

He reached his Forty-fifth street room without meeting with an adventure.

It was two o'clock.

All desire to sleep had left him.

Filling his pipe and lighting it he sat down in a chair and proceeded to smoke.

He commenced to make another examination of the handkerchief and the half-filled bottle.

Would these things furnish a clew to the identity of the man who had made the attempt on his life?

The handkerchief had no mark on it.

It was silk and hemstitched.

It was like hundreds which could be purchased at any dry goods store.

Grice tossed it into a bureau drawer.

It was of no value as a clew.

He now turned his attention to the bottle containing the narcotic.

On one side was a label.

The detective read:

G. P. Martin,

Druggist, Morris Dock, N. Y.

No. 17,841. Directions—One teaspoonful before eating.

"At one time this bottle contained a prescription," Grice mused. "It was filled by Martin, the druggist at Morris Dock. His store is near the Academy. I feel sure that he has not in stock this narcotic. It was not purchased of him. For whom did he fill the prescription? Was it for some inmate of the Academy? Mina or Mrs. Ellsworth? I'll find out. After I have seen Anita I'll take a trip up to Morris Dock and see Martin. Why not go up there now? A good idea. The druggist may not like being routed out of bed, but he'll have to grin and bear it."

Grice sprang up out of his chair.

Immediately he left the house.

He reached the elevated railroad station and boarded a Harlem train.

At the terminus he took the electric train and arrived

Reaching the drug store he rang the night bell nearly five minutes before anyone came to the door.

Grice recognized the proprietor as soon as he was admitted to the store.

"This is the fifth time I've been rung up," Martin ejaculated as he closed the door.

"I'm sorry," Grice replied in his natural tone of voice, and Martin wheeled around and scrutinized him closely.

He was well acquainted with the detective, but on account of his disguise he had not recognized him.

Grice laughed.

"I'll be hanged. Grice, I'd never have recognized you if you had not spoken in your natural voice," Martin ejaculated. "Come into the back room," and he conducted the detective into the apartment behind the prescription counter.

"Now what brought you here at this unearthly hour?" the druggist asked as soon as they were seated.

"I came here in search of information," Grice replied.

"The deuce!"

The detective took the bottle out of his pocket, handed it to Martin, and said:

"I want you to tell me for whom you filled that prescription."

The druggist examined the label and looked at the contents of the bottle.

He removed the cork and smelled.

Then he started.

"Grice," he ejaculated, "do you know what the bottle contains?"

"A deadly narcotic," the detective replied.

"I never sold it. I haven't got the drug in my stock. It is Wahma, one of the most insidious of East Indian poisons."

"How do you know?"

"I have made a study of all kinds of poisons—mineral and vegetable. There is only one place in New York City where this drug can be purchased."

"Do you mean the old herb doctor's place down in Varick street?"

"Yes."

"I know the man."

"He is honest."

"Oh, yes."

"I've been acquainted with him for a great many years. He is an eccentric character, but a perfectly honest man. If he sold this drug—the person who got it off him must have used subterfuge. Where did you get it?"

"I can't tell you at this time."

"Ghew! As sphinx-like as ever. I know one thing—you are at work on a mystery. I suppose I'll learn all about it in time. Now I'll look at my prescription book and find out for whom I put up this prescription."

Martin took down a scrap book off a shelf, placed it on a table and opened it.

Grice watched him in silence.

"Here it is," the druggist finally exclaimed, placing his finger upon a prescription, which was posted on one of the pages of the book. "No. 17,841. Filled on December 15th for Miss Tillie Vane. A remedy for indigestion prescribed by Dr. Leslie Farnsworth. Humph!"

He looked across at Grice.

The detective had given a grunt.

"That's not very satisfactory," he communicated as he put the bottle back into his pocket. "Will you hand me your poison book?"

"Certainly," Martin replied, and he passed the book over to the detective, who commenced to examine the pages.

A long silence followed.

The druggist waited anxiously, wondering what Grice was searching for in the poison book.

At last the detective raised his head.

His finger rested on a line in the centre of the page.

"I see from the record that on December 5th you sold twenty-five cents worth of arsenic to Professor Ellsworth," he said.

Martin started.

"Yes, I sold the professor arsenic," he exclaimed—"Look here, Grice—"

"Well?" Adam queried.

"Be honest with me and tell me what you are trying to find out? Lately ugly rumors have been floating around in regard to Professor Ellsworth's death. Pos-

"I sold any poison to any member of the Academy household. I told him that I had not—"

"Then you told him an untruth—"

"I did because I considered he had no right to pry into my affairs."

"Did you have any talk with the professor when you sold him the arsenic—can you recall what was said?"

"Yes."

"He said he wanted to poison rats."

"Did you sell poison to any other member of the Academy household?"

"No."

"Did you become acquainted with the Spaniard who lived with the Ellsworths?"

"No."

"He never came in here."

"Then you have heard the rumor about him?"

"I have—and it has been my impression that the professor committed suicide."

"You gained that impression from the knowledge that he had purchased arsenic?"

"Exactly."

"It is strange."

"Grice, are you investigating the rumors in regard to Ellsworth's death?"

"I'll be frank with you, Martin—I am. I want you not to tell any one about my visit here—"

"I'll be as dumb as an oyster."

"I shall be obliged to you."

"I hope you will not permit my name to get mixed up in the affair unless it is absolutely necessary."

"You need not worry about my saying anything."

"I know I need not."

"I must go now."

"Will you remain and take breakfast with me?"

"I can't. I've got to hurry back to the city. Before I leave let me have a sample of the arsenic you sold to Ellsworth—"

"I'll get it for you."

Martin put some of the poison into a small phial and gave it to Grice, who soon departed.

All the way back to the city the detective pondered over the evidence.

Over and over again he asked himself, did Professor Ellsworth commit suicide?

Professor Whithaus was sure that Ellsworth had died of arsenic poisoning.

Martin would prove that on December 5th Ellsworth had purchased arsenic.

Grice was in a quandary.

The evidence was conflicting.

It was six o'clock when the detective left the elevated railroad train at the Forty-second street station and proceeded direct to Professor Whithaus's house.

The great analyst was an early riser and he received Grice in his laboratory.

"I desire to ask you a question," the detective said to the professor as soon as he was seated.

"What is it?" the analyst asked.

"Suppose I should give you a sample of arsenic, would you be able to tell whether it was the same grade and make as that which you found in the stomach?"

"Yes."

"Then, here is a phial filled with arsenic—please test it—"

"Ah!"

The professor took hold of the phial.

He poured some of the contents into a glass tube and commenced to make a test.

Grice looked on with interest.

His pulse beat with excitement.

A great deal might depend upon the result of the experiment.

At length the test was finished.

The professor laid down the tube and looked at Grice.

"This is not the same make and grade of arsenic as that which I found in Ellsworth's stomach," he remarked.

"Would you be willing to testify to this effect in court?" the detective asked.

"Certainly. I'd stake my reputation upon my analysis being correct."

"This is all I want to know just at present."

"Tilman will be up here this morning."

"He will make the water color sketches for you."

"Will he call early?"

"I expect him to do so."

Grice went from the professor's house to a restaurant, where he had a breakfast.

CHAPTER VII.

Grice was puzzled in regard to the attempt made on his life.

While eating his breakfast he pondered over the discoveries he had made.

The bottle which contained the poisonous narcotic was conclusive proof that his would-be murderer had at some time been connected either with Tillie Vane or the Academy.

Just now he did not consider it expedient to question the girl about the perscription she had had filled at Martin's drug store, and how the bottle had gotten out of her possession.

She was aware that he was investigating the death of Professor Ellsworth.

Although he had cautioned her not to talk about his having interviewed her, still she might have spoken of the matter with some one who, being deeply interested in the case, might have planned to put him out of the way.

Of course this was a mere surmise.

Grice had no positive evidence to prove that this was so.

And on the other hand there was nothing to show that the theory was not correct.

Therefore he made up his mind to act with extreme caution.

He would not go near Tillie.

He did not doubt her integrity.

He believed her to be an honest girl.

But still he thought it best to work in another direction.

The many contradictory features of the case were puzzling.

If it had not been for Professor Whithaus's positive assertion that the poison which Ellsworth had purchased was not of the same grade and make as the arsenic discovered in the stomach, Grice might have been inclined to think that after all the professor had committed suicide.

But then might not Whithaus be as liable to make a mistake as any other man?

The detective asked himself this question.

Great analysts had made mistakes, he reasoned.

Not one of them was infallible.

In many and many a criminal case the expert testimony was contradictory.

One set of experts had testified to one thing and another set had contradicted them.

Both sides had quoted renowned authorities to sustain their position—and the detective believed that all were honest in their convictions, and were not influenced by jealousy or the fee which they were to receive for the analysis which they had made.

Grice realized that he must secure more positive evidence than that of Professor Whithaus to prove that the arsenic which was purchased by Professor Ellsworth was of a different grade than that which was found in the stomach.

If he should not be able to show that some other member of the Academy household had purchased arsenic besides the professor then his case would be a very weak one.

No twelve sensible men would convict any one on such evidence.

In studying his cases Grice had adopted an excellent method.

He would imagine himself on the side of the defence and consider what methods he would adopt, and what evidence he would produce to clear a client of the charges brought against him, and then when he had mapped out this plan he would set to work and try to discover evidence which would combat it.

This was one of the reasons why every case he presented in court was so carefully prepared and the proof was so clear that there was no loophole through which the criminal could escape.

Lawyers dreaded to have Adam Grice pitted against them.

A very eminent practitioner once said, when talking about the detective and his methods:

"I would sooner fight the devil than Adam Grice, whom I consider one of the best posted men in the country. One can never tell what surprises he is going to spring; when one thinks that one has prepared a

clear defence, he is sure to discover that Adam is always prepared to tear it into smithereens. You can't corner him with technicalities."

And the lawyer did not over-estimate the detective's ability.

Adam left the restaurant.

On his way to The Rookery he stopped at the store of the herbalist on Varick street.

He found Dr. Donneman at work in his back room.

The dealer in herbs was a small, thin man, with sharp features and long white hair, the straggling locks of which hung down over his shoulders.

His face was always clean shaven and upon the bridge of his nose rested a pair of steel framed spectacles, which were twice the size ordinarily worn by people.

He was dressed in a black continental garb; knee breeches, with silver buttons, black silk stockings, and low shoes, with silver buckles, which held together the black silk ribbon laces.

Grice was well acquainted with the eccentric herbalist, who was one of the most peculiar characters to be found in the old Ninth Ward.

Notwithstanding Dr. Donneman's morose expression of features, he was one of the kindest hearted old men that one would desire to meet.

All the children in the neighborhood would testify to this, and every one of them loved him.

Perhaps this was because he showed his fondness for them by treating them to candy, and during his leisure moments devising for them new games to play.

It is safe to say that the doctor gave away five times more soda water than he sold.

He was a bachelor and he had lived in the two-story building, which he owned on Varick street, for over half a century.

His father had kept the store before him, and his sign, although it was now faded and weather beaten, still hung over the front door.

If the doctor had wanted to he could have retired and lived in luxury, because the property which he owned in the ward brought in a large income.

But the old man was married to the ward and he was a second edition of old St. Nicholas, going around in the dark and relieving suffering whenever he discovered it to exist.

He lived up to the Biblical injunction of not letting his left hand know what his right hand did.

Grice entered the back room and greeted the doctor, who fortunately was alone.

The herbalist wiped his hands on his apron, turned around when he heard the detective enter, and peered at him over his spectacles.

"Grice," he said, and there was a twinkle in his clear gray eye, "it is very nice of you to call upon me. Let me see, it is about six months since you were here last. Then you called to get some information from me. I suppose now you have just stopped in to inquire about my health. Isn't that so, my boy? Take a seat and make yourself 'to home.' Sit down on that three-legged stool—it's the most comfortable seat in my den—"

"I have no doubt of that, doctor, because it is the only one in your den of wizzardry," Grice rejoined, seating himself upon the stool.

"Tut, tut! Now don't go making fun of my poor accommodations for entertaining my friends."

"I'm not."

"Well, I'll believe you," and the doctor seated himself on top of an upturned empty barrel, resting his hands upon his knees and gazing intently at his visitor.

"I had a motive for calling to see you."

"So I calculated."

"Last night some one tried to kill me."

"Humph!"

"Please examine this drug."

The detective handed the bottle of poison to the herbalist, who immediately removed the cork and placed his nostrils over the mouth, taking a sniff.

It was only a second.

Then he put the cork back into the mouth of the bottle, remarking:

"Dohma—East Indian narcotic—it is a wonder you are alive," and then he examined the label.

As soon as the doctor's eyes fell upon the label he gave a prolonged whistle.

"Why, I sold this drug," he ejaculated. "I remember

the bottle—or, rather, the label. I pasted another label over it, but I see it has been removed."

"You sold that drug?" the detective queried.

"Yes."

"To whom?"

"A woman."

"When?"

"A month ago."

"How was it that you sold such a deadly narcotic to a woman?"

"She had a prescription for it."

"Was it signed by a physician with whom you are acquainted?"

"It was signed by a druggist—"

"What is his name?"

"G. P. Martin—this is one of his bottles—" placing his forefinger on the label.

"The prescription, you say, was signed by him?"

"It was—it was straight enough—the handwriting was his. I am familiar with it, because he often purchases drugs of me."

"Let me see the prescription."

Dr. Donneman hopped down from his perch, secured a book off a shelf, and handed it to Grice, who examined the slip of paper, with Martin's name signed to it, and which was pasted in one of the pages.

The handwriting resembled Martin's.

The order was written on one of the druggist's letter heads.

Grice was familiar with Martin's chirography.

But notwithstanding this apparent positive proof he was certain the druggist had never written the order and it was a forgery.

Who was the forger?

Was this the work of a woman?

If it was, she was very clever.

Martin's handwriting was not easy to imitate.

He had a peculiar way of forming the letters, which, we would suppose, would baffle the most expert forger.

And yet here was every letter in the order formed just as if the druggist had written it.

The detective was silent as he scrutinized the writing.

"That's Martin's handwriting," Dr. Donneman ejaculated while he peered over Grice's shoulder. "He can't go back on that—"

"It's a forgery," Grice rejoined.

"No, no, Adam—that is no forgery. Turn over to the next page and you will find another one of Martin's orders."

The detective did as he was directed.

He made a study of the other order and compared the writing with that of the one calling for the dohma.

"What say you?" the herbalist asked after a time.

"I hardly know what to say," Grice replied.

"Is there any evidence of forgery in that order?"

"I can find none and yet—"

"You feel convinced it is a forgery?"

"Yes. Let me have both of these orders?"

"Of course I will—but before you take them I'll put a private mark on each."

The old man wrote his initials upon each slip of paper and then removed them from the book, giving them to the detective, who put them away in his wallet.

"Would you be able to identify the woman who presented this order?" Grice asked.

"Yes," the herbalist replied.

"Was she old or young?"

"She was about twenty years of age, quite plump, good looking with the complexion of a ripe peach, and light brown hair."

"Did you have any conversation with her?"

"No. I was busy at the time. I filled the prescription and gave it to her, without asking any questions."

"Was she well dressed?"

"Yes."

Grice commenced to make a sketch on the back of an envelope.

My readers will remember that Grice was quite an artist, and those who have preserved "As the Clock Struck Twelve" will recall how in that case he made several drawings which played an important part at the time.

Dr. Donneman watched him with considerable interest, wondering what object he had in making the drawing.

"Did the young woman look anything like this sketch?" the detective asked at last holding the drawing up for the herbalist to inspect.

"By Jove!" the doctor ejaculated with considerable excitement. "That is the image of her. You know I have a good memory for faces. Although I only saw her once I remember every line of her face distinctly."

"It is strange."

"You are acquainted with the young woman?"

"Yes."

"Does she work for Martin?"

"No."

"What is her name?"

"Tillie Vane."

Grice put the sketch into his pocketbook.

This discovery perplexed him not a little.

He bade the herbalist good-by and left.

He did not make any explanation and Dr. Donneman refrained from asking questions.

The evidence showed that Tillie had purchased the narcotic.

Who had given her the order for it?

She did not write it.

Grice was sure of that.

He had seen specimens of her writing and he knew that she was not an expert in penmanship.

In spite of everything he could not help a suspicion entering his mind that Tillie was not what she appeared to be.

Could it be possible he was mistaken in his estimates of her character? he thought.

He made up his mind to have another talk with Martin.

Perhaps he might be able to throw some light on the mystery surrounding the order for the East Indian narcotic.

One thing he felt convinced of, and that was that Martin would pronounce the order a forgery.

After leaving the herbalist's store Grice made his way through Sixth avenue to Fourth street.

He was just about to turn the corner when who should he come face to face with but Martin.

Immediately he laid a hand upon the druggist's arm and stopped him.

"What do you want?" Martin demanded, not recognizing the disguised sleuth.

"Are you not Mr. Morris, of Morris Dock?" Grice asked in a disguised tone of voice.

"That is my name—you seem to know me, but I don't recognize you. What do you want?"

"I desire to talk with you," the detective answered in his natural voice, which the druggist recognized.

"Well, I'll be hanged, Ad—"

"Hush!"

"I did not dream of meeting you. Where did you spring from?"

"I came down town to meet a friend of mine. I was hurrying along to reach his place of business when you halted me so unceremoniously."

"Is your appointment an important one?"

"Not exactly."

"Can you spare five minutes?"

"Yes."

"Then walk along with me."

"I'll do it."

They passed along through Fourth street.

For some moments the detective was silent.

"Martin, did Tillie Vane ever work for you?" he finally asked, turning to his companion.

"She never worked for me," Martin replied. "Why do you ask?"

"Look at this and tell me if you recognize the writing," Grice said, taking the Dohma prescription out of his pocketbook and showing it to the druggist.

"That is my handwriting," Martin answered the moment his eyes fell on the paper. "But, hello," he ejaculated the next instant when he had read the order. "I never sent such an order to Dr. Donneman—and it's for Dohma, too. What does this mean, Adam? That is my handwriting. I'd take an oath to it, but—"

"You say you never sent this order to the herbalist?"

"Never—never."

"And it is your handwriting?"

"I'm stumped—"

"Then this is a forgery."

"My signature is not. No one can forge that—"

"Still—"

"No, I wrote that signature. Do you see that G?"

"Yes."

"Look at that small dot in the centre of the curl."

"I see it."

"Would a forger be likely to put a dot like that in a signature?"

"Well, hardly; and yet a clever forger might notice it, surmise that it belonged to the signature and put it in."

"It is not probable."

"Hump!"

"See here."

"Well?"

Martin was holding up the order and looking at the paper.

He put his finger on the word Dohma and said:

"A word was erased from here and Dohma written in its place. The writing was removed with acid."

"Now that the light shines through the paper I can notice a roughness in that spot," the detective replied.

"Dohma is not in my handwriting. It is a very clever imitation and the ink is the same color as that with which the note was written. Without the closest examination we would not be able to discover the forgery."

"The order is dated a month ago."

"I see it is."

"Can you recall what it was for?"

"Let me see—three times last month I sent to Dr. Donneman for roots and drugs. By jingo—"

"Well?"

"This order was for gensang?"

"Did you get the gensang?"

"Yes."

"Who did you send?"

"My clerk."

"Is he acquainted with Tillie Vane?"

"I think he was."

"Why do you say was?"

"He is no longer in my employ. I discharged him two weeks ago."

"How long was he in your employ?"

"A month."

"What is his name?"

"Joseph Goss."

"Where is he now?"

"I don't know."

"Did he reside in Morris Dock before you employed him?"

"No. His folks live somewhere in the city."

"Why did you discharge him?"

"I caught him stealing."

"For whom did he work before he came to you?"

"I do not remember."

"Didn't you inspect his letters of recommendation?"

"No. I only looked at his diploma."

"How did you know that he was or is acquainted with Tillie Vane?"

"I saw him out with her. But why—"

"Don't ask any questions. I haven't got time to answer them now. Keep mum about this matter."

"I shall."

"You can't tell where I'd be likely to find Goss?"

"No. Question Tillie."

"I'll do it."

"Did she—"

"Good-by, old fellow. I'll see you again. I'm sorry to have detained you," and after shaking the druggist's hand Grice hurried away, leaving Martin standing on the corner of MacDougal street, his mind perplexed with a hundred and one conjectures.

"A curious duck," the druggist muttered, gazing after Grice, and then when he was out of sight he wheeled around on his heels and walked away.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of all the passions of which human nature is susceptible a passion for gambling is inconceivably the most pernicious.

Once indulge in it and you are inevitably hurried forward to irretrievable ruin.

There is scarcely an instance on record of a person having yielded to the temptation to a certain extent and then breaking off from it.

There is a sort of fatality in it.

Its victim has no free will of his own.

He sees the folly of the course he is pursuing—he sees the issue, too, and yet he cannot or will not help himself.

He acts like a man who knows his destiny, and

seems resolved, thoughtful though it be, of fulfilling it with the least possible delay.

It is hardly any use to reason with him—he only is a fit subject for being reasoned with who acts from ignorance or thoughtlessness.

With the confirmed gambler it is far different.

His judgment always condemns his conduct; it pronounces him to be a madman, and yet his will impels him forward in his career.

Talk not to him of the claims of wife and children; what cares he about them being thrown destitute and unprotected on an un pitying world?

Apart from their interference with his gambling propensities, he may be kind enough to them.

Possibly he may, so long as he has the means, be the most affectionate of husbands and the best of fathers; but much rather than that his passion for play should be denied the means of indulgence he would see them dying in the streets of cold and hunger.

You may even tell him that the inevitable consequence of frequenting the gambling house will not only be the beggary of himself and his family, but he is periling the salvation of his soul by the course he is adopting, it will all be utterly ineffective.

You make no more impression on him than you would on the table on which he plays his cards or throws his dice.

He has sufficient sense to know that eternal perdition is an evil; but still he will brave it.

And what is the result?

He will probably destroy himself or set about robbing others—aye, even murdering others—sometimes his dearest friends.

If he can by means of swindling, or fraud, or forgery, or any other secret mode of prying on society, replenish his depleted exchequer, and thus be enabled to present himself anew at the faro table, the roulette wheel, or the card board—it is all very well—that mode of course is attended with less personal danger, and with the least immediate risk of falling into the clutches of the police.

But if all other resources fail, if his pockets are empty, if the cancer of gambling be gnawing at his vitals, the confirmed gambler will not scruple to resort to murder.

Gambling is the source of more evils to society in New York—and in fact any of the large cities—as well as to the individuals themselves, than any other vice which exists.

Our moralists and legislators do not seem to have any conception of the share it contributes to the crimes and immoralities with which the Metropolis abounds.

The cause of half the suicides which occur in the higher and middle walks of life is gambling.

The great majority of embezzlements have the same origin.

The same can be said of a large proportion of other crimes which are daily committed by persons of respectability.

Every trace of morality, religion and humanity is wiped out of the ruined gambler's mind—he is a desperate character and is at all times prepared for desperate enterprises.

In every place where the most depraved of human beings are there the ruined gambler can be found.

The prisons are full of them; Sing Sing and the Tombs swarm with them.

Far better would it be if the good women of the country, who are members of the white ribboned society of which the noble Frances Willard was the leader, would devote their time to working for the suppression of gambling, than wasting their energies as they are now in a crusade against a secondary evil.

For nearly ten years I was stationed at Police Headquarters in New York City, and I spent much time in the Tenderloin and in covering the police stations of the East and West sides, and in that time I noticed that nearly every criminal arrested owed his downfall to gambling.

The Tenderloin precinct is the hotbed of gambling, next to the legalized gambling of Wall street—for in Wall street more men are ruined hourly—sent into criminal careers—than in all the haunts of vice in the city combined.

Some time ago I met the greatest gambler in the Tenderloin; his account of the mental process which some persons undergo when they see themselves plundered by the robber connected with the hells filled me

with a sort of horror from which I did not recover for days.

The gambler at such a moment is crazed.

You hear people speak of a square gambler—a square bank. Let me tell you that there are no square gamblers or no square gambling establishments.

Every place in the Tenderloin, from the lowest to the highest, is run by crooks. Most of the dealers are men who have served time in State prison, and there is not a proprietor of any one of these hells but what will rob his victims in one way or another.

The bank is always sure of winning in the long run.

A victim may be permitted to win for a time but in the end he is squeezed as dry as a sucked orange.

The Tenderloin, as I said, is the hotbed of gambling.

Amongst the three hundred and seventy-one gambling houses in the precinct, which are running night and day, and which have been running continuously for years, notwithstanding the fact that the police have said they were all closed, none is more notorious than the establishment of Phil Dallie.

I shall describe it and its proprietor, because in one of its rooms was enacted one of the scenes of my narrative.

Dallie's is on Twenty-fifth street a few doors from one of the side entrances of the Hoffman House.

It is run under the name of Montaux Club and the parties whom it supports as well as the proprietor himself take every means in their power to be protected by the police.

Men in high authority, men whom the people have elected to honorable places in the city government, share in its profits.

The furnishings of the house cost thousands of dollars.

From its outward appearance no one would suspect that it was a gambling hell.

The shades are always drawn down in the front of the windows and an uninitiated one would think it was a private mansion, the owners of which were away from home.

All the rooms are decorated in the highest style of art, and the suppers, which are served gratis, are the most sumptuous and are laid out in a style that would astonish a European monarch.

Over five thousand dollars a day is spent on the table.

But these suppers are not thrown away.

A superb supper with a liberal supply of the choicest and most expensive wines often inspires a man to gamble when nothing else will.

Close observation has taught me that the transition from the supper room of any of the hells in the Tenderloin is as natural as the transition from the latter to complete ruin.

Attached to the establishment are a certain number of persons who have been christened 'Greeks' and 'Spiders'—without a penny in the world—who are of inestimable value to Dallie.

These persons are well treated.

They are the ropers-in—the men who are constantly on the lookout for flats—for the country jay with a well-filled purse—the merchants with thousands who are in the city to buy goods—and the young men with rich papas, and who have prospects, who are sowing their wild oats.

Many a 'fly' who has stepped into Dallie's for the first time with a smooth tongued 'Spider' has not had the slightest intention of risking a dollar.

He has been pressed by the "Spider" who coaxed him in to partake of the supper and the sparkling wine.

The minute the 'fly' accepts the liberal invitation he is caught.

But the pigeon is never plucked on the first night.

He is permitted to win a good sized stake.

His appetite for play is educated with great care.

The 'Greeks' in the meantime, who are investigators, obtain information in regard to the full extent of his resources and they regulate their movements in the future dealings with the 'fly' accordingly.

It matters not though he be not well supplied with "the ready," if he has prospects of coming into a fortune or his father be wealthy.

Dallie's "Greeks" and "Spiders" have been the fiends who have ruined hundreds of bright New York boys, and who have blackmailed the parents of others out of millions of dollars.

Nearly every hotel clerk in the Tenderloin is an agent in the employ of Dallie.

He receives a commission on every 'pigeon' he sends to the house to be plucked, and the clerks at most fashionable hotels receive the largest commission.

Dallie's cook is the celebrated Monsieur Du Fue, and his salary is fifteen thousand dollars a year.

He has twelve assistants.

All the employees are dressed in the richest livery and they live in the most expensive style.

The main gambling hall is the parlor at the right of the hall and in it are twenty faro tables; on the other side of the hall are the roulette outfits and the dice or hazard layouts.

Dallie never plays.

He has not touched a card or bet a dollar outside his own establishment for thirty years.

When big games are in progress he is always present.

He is in the confidence of all the great political leaders and politicians.

Dallie's 'bank roll' is a large one.

Every poor 'pigeon' is made to believe that he will be fortunate enough to break the bank.

When the Montaux was first established in lower Broadway, before it moved uptown, Dallie was not rich enough to back the bank and certain politicians advanced him the money.

And even though he is rich now Dallie considers it is good policy to have influential partners.

At one time Dallie had for partners the Mayor of the city, the Recorder, a Judge of the Supreme Court, the District Attorney, the Chief of Police, all the Police Commissioners, the head of the detective bureau, the leaders of Tammany Hall and the boss of the Republican county committee.

If I should mention the names of his present partners people would hardly believe me.

One is a clergyman, who poses as a reformer, and who receives from Dallie an annual contribution of ten thousand dollars; another one is the editor and part owner of a large daily newspaper; and another is a Judge of one of the courts.

Besides these there are others.

Dallie's gains are enormous.

Last year during the season the profits averaged ten thousand dollars a week.

In one night alone the bank won one hundred and ten thousand dollars from a rich Western trust magnate.

Independently of the bank's chance against anyone who plays, it has an additional chance in its favor, and that is the percentage which is deducted from each player by the croupier for the expenses of the game.

The chances, or "points," as they are called in the language of the hells, in favor of the bank vary with the different games.

At rouge-et-noir the average points in favor of the player are two in sixty-eight; at roulette the average are two in thirty-eight; at un deux cinque, which is played with a large ivory ball with forty-eight spots, twenty-four black and sixteen red and eight blue, the average six in forty-eight; at French hazard, one in one hundred; at faro, one in ten.

But even supposing the playing to be equal and that neither party in the end had gained or lost, even in that case the bank would be the gainer from the croupier's percentage.

Dallie is a cautious man and keeps no books.

There is one good regulation in Dallie's, bad as are the doings in other respects, which does not exist in any other gambling house in the Metropolis.

It is invariably closed at twelve o'clock on Saturday night and it does not open again until noon on Monday.

And on Sunday Dallie and his family can be seen occupying a pew twice in the day at a fashionable church on Fifth avenue.

He is a strange individual and I must say that in all the years I have known him I have been unable to analyze his character.

His history is curious.

If it were written it would form one of the most interesting stories that ever appeared in print.

At one time he was a butcher's helper in Washington Market, without a dollar in the world outside of his weekly wages.

The way in which he rose in the world is given.

By nature he has a wonderful head for figures, and in all that relates to finance he is an expert calculator.

Having early discovered that he was possessed with this gift, he began to figure on the chances of winning at faro, and he formed a remarkable system of play.

He commenced to visit a resort, which was then running on Fulton street, opposite to the market, and which was patronized chiefly by butchers, and there he played for small stakes every night except Sunday.

Even at that time, as rough and tough as he was, he went to church on the Sabbath. Curious, wasn't it?

Luck seemed to be with him from the first and he soon purchased a stand in the market.

One day Dallie fell in with a jockey, who gave him a tip on a dark horse that was to run at Saratoga.

The odds were one hundred to one.

The jockey informed the butcher that the race was "fixed," that he would bet himself if he could get any one to place the bet for him; he did not dare to place it himself, because if it should be found out he would be expelled from the track.

Dallie offered to place the bet for the jockey and received five hundred from him.

He put on the horse all his own money—which was one thousand dollars.

The horse won.

Dallie then purchased an interest in the establishment on Fulton street and in a short time he owned the whole place.

The den, although it was not one of any great note, still, the system of plunder carried on in it was extensive.

Dallie, the instant he became the owner, formed solid political connections, and then he was never afraid of having proceedings instituted against him.

Having amassed a great deal of money in Fulton street Dallie became ambitious to own the largest establishment in the city.

He opened up a place on Broadway near Bond street, which immediately became the fashion, and then it was that he formed his corps of Greeks and Spiders.

Later on he opened a large place at Long Branch, and another club at Saratoga, which were in full blast during the summer season.

When the Tenderloin commenced to thrive Dallie moved his den to the Twenty-fifth street house.

While running the place on Fulton street Dallie met the daughter of a minister at the church he attended on Sundays.

She fell in love with him and married him.

This was another remarkable feature in his career.

In his dealings with men in his gambling house Dallie was the suave, polite, shrewd rascal, who would pluck every pigeon who flew into his net, and if it were necessary, he would not scruple about ordering one of his "Greeks" or "Spiders" to follow a large winner and rob or murder him.

But on the outside Dallie was a philanthropist—spending thousands every year in charity—in helping the widow and orphan—in assisting the university extension and college settlements, the free lecture courses, the vacant lot farmers, the tenement house improvement guild—and it was known that he contributed to the support of five rescue homes for fallen women, and one home for the reclaiming of discharged convicts.

At home he was an ideal husband and father.

One of his sons became a minister, one a physician, and the third a lawyer.

His character was a remarkable combination of all that was good and all that was bad.

He did not drink nor chew, and so far as women were concerned he was moral.

In dealing with his minions he was a martinet—but with his patrons he was always polite.

Although he was not an educated man, one could hardly discover it.

His long association with men of polished manners had educated him so that he acted like a gentleman of refinement, and he spoke correct English.

Such in outline is the history of the rise and progress of Phil Dallie.

In person he was tall, broad shouldered, and muscular.

With his iron gray hair, smooth-shaven face, broad, benevolent features, ruddy and healthy, his soft gray eyes, his suit of black broadcloth, standing collar, and white necktie, anyone who did not know him would have conjectured that he was a clergyman.

One would not think he knew anything of the wicked

side of life, but Phil Dallie was up to every trick of his trade, and he was constantly putting forward new schemes to enable his "Spiders" to pluck the pigeons.

Occasionally he would direct some of the newspaper Greeks to publish in their newspapers stories of large winnings having been made at the Montaux Club.

This he did for the purpose of creating the impression among "fits" that money was to be easily gained at his establishment.

It was an ingenious device and it always succeeded.

It gave the impression that luck had turned against Phil Dallie at last.

The "pigeons" would flock to the Montaux Club from all quarters, everyone expecting he would "pigeon" the house, if, indeed, he were not lucky enough to break the bank.

At these times every uninitiated one seemed more desirous than at any other time to play deeply; they did play deeply, and in the end Dallie's bank account was increased by their losses.

So Phil has been carrying on his game in this way for years, and still the "suckers" continue to crowd to the Montaux.

I have described Dallie's hell and ways thus minutely to show to those who are inclined to hazard their money on any game of chance that, while they may succeed in winning for a time, they will lose all in the end, and it is well to listen to the warning and not permit yourselves to be drawn into the gambler's net.

Phil Dallie's place was filled with gamblers at noon on the day that Adam Grice had the interview with the old herbalist.

Two days before all the newspapers had published accounts of two men having won one hundred thousand dollars from the bank, and half a dozen others having profited at faro and the other games of chance.

At the end of each article was a statement to the effect that Phil Dallie's luck had changed, and his "bank roll" was fast shrinking.

The gudgeons nibbled at the bait and flocked to the Montaux, so than at the time of which I speak every dealer had his hands full every hour of the day and night.

Any one desiring to study the gambling character in some of its phases could have done so this day at Dallie's.

There were men there who still continued to move in fashionable life, who were well dressed, but who had been obliged to abandon the Montaux because the remains of their former resources were so small that they could no longer play regularly to the usual amounts demanded by the house, but who managed to scrape enough together for this one go at the bank, hoping to make a strike.

These men keep up appearances as long as they can.

And then there were others who had belonged to this first class, but who were no longer able to keep up appearances; their clothes having a shabby genteel aspect, and their pockets in a still worse condition, but like the other infatuated pigeons had succeeded in raising the wind for 'just another go.'

The fashionable dude with gold lined pockets, the bold dashing Wall street broker, the sedate merchant, the bank clerk, all rubbed shoulders together at the tables, their hearts beating with the hope of winning a fortune.

But in these rooms not every phase of the gambling character was to be found.

There was not to be seen the man for whose entire wardrobe you would not have given ten cents—his hat broken in the rim in a half dozen places—the color originally black, but now through wear and tear a dirty gray—the crown cut and dented—his coat bearing proof on the face of it—yes, and even on the back—that it has seen a war-like service—the collar all covered with grease—only one button on it—one would never think of counting the holes in it—the coat only fit for one thing, and that is to adorn a man of straw in some farmer's cornfield—no such a looking gambler was to be found at Dallie's but around the corner on Sixth avenue, in Adams's, Miller's, Smith's, Shank Field's, Negro Ned's such men were to be found—once they had been patrons of the Montaux but they were too low down now in the scale to present themselves at the portals of the gilded Montaux of fame and shame.

In the faces of such men was the starvation—perhaps a few years before when they had been lured into Dal-

lie's their countenances were happy in expression and ruddy with health.

And yet notwithstanding the extreme destitution they have continued by some means—and very often that means is robbery and bloodshed—to secure money enough to take a shy at the tiger.

It is surprising to see how fast men descend from Dallie's to the dens in Sixth avenue and from thence to the hells on the Bowery and in Mulberry Bend.

They hardly stop at all.

A few months suffice for the transformation from a gentleman to a tramp.

All of them are completely under the influence of a damnable incantation.

Their recklessness grows.

Finally the end is a suicide's death or a prison cell.

Every man in Dallie's on this day was either starting in or had started on the downward path.

Just as the hands of the clock pointed to the hour of noon there entered the gambling house a young man about twenty-five years of age, with classical features, jet black hair, shining black eyes and a gentleman in appearance.

The attendant at the door nodded to him familiarly and one could see that he was not a stranger in the place.

That he was seized with the gambling craze was evident.

No doubt his brain was the seat of a perfect tempest of passion and perhaps he cursed the first moment he had entered the pandemonium, though now all the moral suasion in the world could not have induced him to quit it.

There was no doubt but what he was wretched on account of his past losses, and yet he was resolutely determined on hazarding all the money he had with him.

From the expression of his face could be read the storm that was raging within him.

Were his bosom exposed to the gaze one would shudder.

As he stood at the croupier's desk purchasing his chips there was noticeable a quivering of his legs, his whole body was trembling, and a cold perspiration was on his pale brow.

A few months before this day Joe Goss was a happy young man.

He was a drug clerk at Riker's, on Sixth avenue, when an aunt died and left him a thousand dollars.

One of Dallie's 'spiders' learned of his good fortune and he soon had him in tow.

Joe lost his place at Riker's through being inattentive to customers.

His thousand dollars soon went into Dallie's treasury and for a time he had to quit the game.

He secured the place with Martin at Morris Dock, and on his days off, when he had money, he spent his time at the Montaux.

The craze had seized him and he was a fiend.

He was now in that condition when he was ready to do anything to get money with which to satisfy his passion.

Dallie was standing near the croupier's desk as Joe was buying his chips.

The experienced gambler studied him intently and a sinister smile played around his lips, but when Joe looked up the expression faded away instantly, he smiled in a fatherly manner and greeted him with homely words.

Joe entered the room and sat down at one of the faro lay-out.

Phil Dallie looked after him and muttered:

"That chap will fetch up in Sing Sing some day. I can read his character like a book. He has no conscience and he is not the suicide kind. He would make a good 'spider' for a time. I'll keep my eye on him, and perhaps I may be able to use him."

Dallie could read the motives of men like a book.

He was a first student of human nature and he seldom made a mistake in the selection of his 'Greeks' and 'spiders.'

He was continually on the lookout for men who would be of use to him.

And Joe Goss he surmised would make an excellent 'spider.'

Many a criminal in Sing Sing had at one time served Dallie as a 'Greek' or spider.

And now Joe Goss, the boss gambler in an under-

hand way had helped to send there because they had tried to betray him.

Just as Goss sat down at the faro table the man whom Tilman had introduced to Grice on the previous evening as Eugene Dupre entered the room.

He spoke to Dallie at the door for a few moments and it was evident that he and the gambler had met before.

Dupree did not purchase any chips.

After leaving Dallie he crossed the room and halted behind Goss' chair, where he stood as silent as a statue watching the progress of the game.

At last Joe's last chip was lost.

He muttered a curse, shoved his chair back from the table and stood up.

Turning around, he beheld Dupre.

His face became as dark as a starless night.

"You hoodooed me," he snarled. "What did you stand behind my chair for?"

"I was waiting for you to lose that last chip," Dupre coolly replied. "I did not want to interrupt your game—"

"You—"

"There, Joe, don't get angry and call names; come and get some lunch. I want to talk with you—" And putting his arm through that of the young man he led him off into the dining room.

They sat down together at a small table and Dupre directed a waiter to fetch a bottle of wine and a luncheon for two.

Joe sat in moody silence and his brow was clouded.

Dupre did not speak to him until after the waiter had placed the wine in the cooler on the floor at the side of the table after having filled the glasses.

"Drink your wine, Joe," Dupre said, as soon as the waiter left.

Goss made no remark but he tossed off the wine.

Dupre watched him for a moment and then said:

"I suppose you are cleaned out?"

"I am dead broke," Goss snarled, "and God only know what I am going to do. I'm on the outs with my folks. I don't dare go to see them—I owe three weeks' board—and—"

"Don't look so blue. Your luck is going to change."

"Not much—"

"Do you want to make some money?"

"I'd do anything to make money—I have no conscientious scruples—"

"Then listen to me—"

"Well?"

"Are you not acquainted with a girl by the name of Tillie Vane, who lives up at Morris Dock?"

"Why do you ask that question? You know blamed well that I know the girl—"

"Well—well—don't flare up so—"

"What have you got to say about Tillie?"

"Are you in love with Tillie?"

"In love with her—no—no—no—I want better stock than that."

"I'm glad to hear that."

"What are you driving at?"

"If you will call upon Tillie, induce her to accompany you to dinner to-night, and drug her. I'll give you two hundred—"

"You will?"

"Here's the money," and Dupre displayed two crisp one hundred dollar bills.

"What's your game?"

"Will you undertake the job?"

"What do you want done with the girl after she is drugged?"

"I'll attend to her. All you have to do is to get her to accompany you to dinner and drug her."

"Where will I take her?"

"I'll engage a private room for you at the Cafe Pollet on Thirtieth street near Sixth avenue."

"All right. I'll do the work. Give me the dough."

"Here it is. Be at the cafe at seven o'clock. Take the girl up to No. 5 on the second floor. Come, let's get out of here."

Goss and Dupre left the gambling house and the former started for Morris Dock.

CHAPTER IX.

A few minutes after leaving the druggist Grice arrived at The Rookery.

He opened the door of Tilman's studio in the key

No one was in the room.

The detective glanced at the clock and saw that he was ten minutes ahead of time.

Filling a pipe with tobacco, he lighted it and threw himself down upon the divan to enjoy a smoke before Anita Posset arrived.

The tobacco had a soothing effect upon his nerves and in a short time he became drowsy.

Before he was aware of it his eyelids closed, his head fell back upon the soft downy pillow, and he dropped off to sleep with the stem of the pipe still between his lips, while he held onto the bowl with his right hand, the same as he would have done if he were awake.

Grice had been without sleep for a good many hours.

He was tired out.

His overtaxed system needed rest.

His inclination to keep awake was overmastered by nature's demands.

Ten minutes passed and then twenty slipped by.

Grice slept soundly.

It was the sleep of a just man with a clear conscience.

Some one knocked on the outer door.

The slumbering detective did not stir.

Three loud raps were given.

Still Grice was not aroused.

Usually he was a very light sleeper and the slightest noise would awaken him.

But now it would have taken the discharge of a pistol to make him hear.

Again the person without knocked on the door and rattled the knob.

No response.

The sleeper seemed to be deaf.

It was a woman who was standing in the hall knocking on the studio door.

She was plainly dressed in a brown tailor made gown, which was a close fit, and set off her form in all its perfection.

Her's was a sweet, angelic countenance.

Every line of her regular features was perfect.

There was intellectual and passionate fire in every glance of her jet black eyes, while her symmetrically curved lips showed determination of character, and an indication of a strong will.

Vacillation was not one of her attributes.

The high forehead was a marked feature and the arching eyebrows and long lashes displayed a pure type of Castilian beauty.

The peach-hued, sallow complexion was positive evidence of her foreign birth.

A look of disappointment was in her face when she rapped for the fourth time and received no answer.

"Can Tilman have forgotten his appointment with me and gone out," she murmured, casting a glance along the hall toward the front door, as if she expected the artist to enter at any minute. "When he goes out he usually leaves a note on the door telling when he will return."

She looked at the door and saw no card tacked to the panel.

"Its strange," she muttered. "I'll knock again."

She did knock vigorously half a dozen times.

She received no response.

A door opened on the other side of the hall and a bushy haired head protruded through the opening.

"Hello!" exclaimed the owner of the head and Anita—for it was she—turned around and looked at the occupant of the opposite studio, who was a man about forty years of age, with sharp, pallid features, sandy complexion, a Van Dyke beard, and a Roman nose.

A long seedy looking dressing gown enveloped his form.

His feet, which were bare, were shoved into a pair of slippers, with the appearance of having seen many years of service.

Beneath the edges of the dressing gown one got a glimpse of blue drawer legs, showing that the artist was attired in his undergarments.

A corn-cob pipe was stuck in his mouth; a red fez cap rested upon the back part of his head; in his left hand a pallet upon which was daubed all the colors of the rainbow, and in his right hand, which was poised in the air, he held a brush and a maul stick.

Anita smiled as she beheld the opposition. She nodded her head and asked:

"Mr. Fisher, did you see Mr. Tilman go out?"

morning. I was looking out of the window at the time and I saw him make off across the plaza as if the devil were on his trail."

"Then some one must have sent for him in a hurry."

"I wish some one would send for me in a hurry. Orders are decidedly slack of late. I envy Sam Tilman sometimes, and I wish I had gone into his line, instead of the impressionist. It's the illustrating and back work that pays nowadays—the mass of people don't appreciate high art."

Fisher was an impressionist of the Aubrey Beardsley school, and when the craze for the weird and fantastic in art lasted he made big money, but like all Bohemians he spent it as fast as he made it, and now since the craze had commenced to wane, at times he often found himself short of the wherewithal to purchase a square meal.

At that time there was no Miles Folet, where a chap, who was hard up, could get a solid meal for fifteen cents, and not lose his self respect; the artist and author, who only had a few cents in his pocket, and wanted to keep up appearances, had to grub in his studio and cook for himself whatever he could afford to purchase.

Fisher was a noble hearted fellow.

There was not a mean bone in his body.

"Say, won't you come in here and wait?" he asked, when Anita did not reply, but stood looking around, her mind undecided about what to do.

"No," she said, "I'm much obliged to you, Mr. Fisher, for your kind invitation. I guess I'll go back home."

"Tilman will be disappointed."

"I can't help it—he ought to have left a note on the door. He had an appointment with me."

"He did? Then he must have gone off to get a big order, or he never would have left without putting up a notice. You know how methodical he is. I guess I'll extend an invitation to myself and dine with Sam to-night."

Anita laughed and her face was wreathed with smiles.

"You'd better wait until he finishes his work—if he has gone to get an order," she ejaculated. "It isn't very probable that he will get the money for it before it is finished."

"That's so," Fisher rejoined, and he made a wry face. "I didn't think of that. I guess I'll have to dine in."

"I'll invite you to dine with me—"

"You will?"

"Of course; I'm not joking."

"Nor I."

"Haven't you treated Mr. Tilman and me to at least a dozen dinners?"

"I don't know, but Sam has treated me a score of times—"

"And I haven't treated you once. So you've got to accept my hospitality to-night. There now, I won't take no for an answer. You tell Mr. Tilman that I was here and I expect him and you to meet me this evening at seven o'clock at the Cafe Pollet."

"Isn't that too expensive a place? They charge a dollar a head there and the wine is extra, you know. Now I know a quiet little joint on Third street where you can get an excellent table d'hôte and wine—"

"Red ink, you mean. I know the place. I've been there. No, we will go to the Cafe Pollet. Now, remember, you and Mr. Tilman be on time. Good-by."

"So long."

Anita swept down the hall and left the building, while Fisher stood in the doorway of his studio, gazing after her with admiring eyes, and murmuring:

"That girl is a brick. Yum—a dinner at the Cafe Pollet—a bottle of Chambertin—yum, yum;" and entering his room, he shut the door, seated himself in front of his easel and plunged into work.

The anticipation of a dinner at the Cafe Pollet buoyed up his flagging spirits.

Before he had poked his head out of the door to see who was knocking at Tilman's studio he was in the dumps and was trying to figure out how he was going to exist on fifty cents until Saturday—it was then Wednesday—when he would receive some money from one of the magazines.

Now he saw a way out of the difficulty.

"I must have to pay for dinner to-night," he mut-

chrome. "To-morrow I can live on twenty-five cents and Friday I can exist on the same amount. There's half a pound of coffee in the caddy, and some condensed milk in the can. I've got two potatoes and an onion in the cupboard. Let me see—to-morrow morning I'll get a five-cent French loaf and a ten-cent kidney—that will be fifteen cents; a head of lettuce five. Confound it. I'll be out of tobacco and I'll have to spend five for weed—can't do without it. Ah, well, I'll have bread and coffee for breakfast and for dinner I'll make a kidney stew and a salad. Friday—let me see—bread and coffee for breakfast; now what'll I get for dinner. The bread will cost five—that will leave me twenty. I'll have to get oil—that will leave fifteen—fifteen—ahem; a pound of spaghetti, five cents; that's filling; ten cents worth of liver, and I'll make the butcher throw in a hunk of suet. That will do! But hello, what about Saturday? I'll have to breakfast on the scraps. But then I'll get my money at ten o'clock. My mind is relieved."

He stepped back from the easel and took a squint at his work, while he whistled a rollicking topical song, and he seemed as light hearted and happy as if his pockets were lined with gold.

And while Fisher was working, Adam Grice, in Tilman's studio, was sleeping.

The loud talking of Anita and the artist out in the hall had not disturbed him.

He had turned over onto his side, the pipe had fallen out of his grasp, and smashed into a dozen fragments with a crash, and the noise did not wake him.

At four o'clock Tilman returned.

Fisher met him in the hall and came into the studio with him.

The noise made by their entrance aroused the detective; he sat up, rubbed his eyes, glanced up at the clock, and sprang off the divan, uttering an exclamation of chagrin.

"Thunderation! Is it that late?"

"What's the matter, Adam?" Tilman queried. He knew well enough what was the matter, and he could not help laughing, while Fisher, who had taken in the situation at a glance, and who was acquainted with Grice, joined in the laugh.

"I've been asleep ever since nine o'clock; confound the luck," Grice replied with a woful expression.

"You must have been in here all the time Miss Posset was hammering on the door, and she hammered to beat the band, too," Fisher said.

"Phew!" Tilman whistled, and he looked at the disappointed detective with a quizzical expression upon his face.

"I ought to be kicked," Grice ejaculated.

"You couldn't help it. I guess you were tuckered out," Fisher remarked. "So, what's the use of getting into a stew over it—it only makes you feel roily. Take things philosophically, my boy."

"Did you see Anita?" Tilman asked, turning toward Fisher, while Grice walked over to the window and glanced out.

He wanted to question Tilman, but he decided to wait until Fisher had gone.

"I saw her and had quite a chat with her," Fisher replied. "She was a little huffy over your not having left a notice on the door."

"What did she say?"

Fisher told of the conversation he had had with Anita.

"We'll meet her," Tilman said, after he had heard what had occurred, "and, Grice, you will accompany us," he added, exchanging a significant glance with the detective, who had turned around from the window.

"I don't see how I can," the detective replied.

"Why not, Grice?" Fisher asked.

"I'll think about it and decide later on."

"I'll leave you fellows now. So long. I'll meet you at half-past six, Tilman. You'll go with us, Grice."

Fisher hurried out of the room and the artist and detective were alone.

"How did you make out?" Grice asked as soon as the door was closed.

"I finished the water color sketches," the artist answered, filling his pipe and sitting down on a stool.

"And I slept away the best part of the day—"

"You must have been up all night?"

"I was."

"Then something happened after midnight?"

"What was it?"

Grice explained.

"Humph!" Tilman snorted as he drew a long whiff on his pipe, after he had listened to the detective's description of what he had discovered. "Adam, they say that two heads are better than one in considering a problem. Now do you know what I think?"

"No; I don't know what you think," Grice rejoined with a smile.

"In some way that fellow Mina has got on to what you are doing."

"No doubt."

"That Tillie Vane is innocent of any wrong doing. Will you listen to my theory of how she came to purchase that poison—or rather how she came to take that order to Dr. Donneman."

"I'll listen."

"Well now, Martin told you that his clerk, Joe Goss, and Tillie were friends."

"Yes."

"Goss changed that order?"

"No doubt."

"He inserted the word dohmma in the place of gensang."

"Exactly."

"He is dishonest."

"So Martin said."

"Probably Mina made his acquaintance. He wanted to get the dohmma. He was afraid to purchase it himself. Now, knowing Goss, he was aware that he bought drugs for his employer—what more rational than that he should ask Goss to get the narcotic for him? He offered to pay him for the service. Goss agreed to get the poison. He got the order for gensang off Martin and made the change in it. Then, perhaps, he was afraid to present it himself. He saw Tillie. What tale he told her, to induce her to make the purchase, it does not matter just now. We know that she presented the order and got the narcotic, and therefore it is reasonable to suppose that Goss succeeded in inducing her to go to Dr. Donneman's establishment. Goss may have been waiting for her out in the street and when she came out of the store he got the bottle off of her and immediately pulled off the label. After separating from Tillie he probably met Mina and gave him the poison."

"I thought of all that this morning."

"Oh, you did?"

"Yes."

"I believe you will find that it is the correct explanation."

"I'm sorry I didn't see Anita."

"You can have a private talk with her this evening. It is now after five o'clock. You will accompany Fisher and me to the Cafe Pollet. After we have eaten dinner I'll induce Fisher to go into the billiard room with me and you will be alone with Anita."

"If I go I'll have to wear a disguise."

"Do so."

"Fisher will think it strange."

"I'll take care of him. I'll tell him that you are working on a case and you don't want to be identified. I'll direct him to call you Mr. Jones, Smith, or any other old name. He won't ask uncomfortable questions. You'll accompany us, won't you?"

"Well—eh—"

"Say yes—"

"I don't—"

"You've got to see Anita?"

"Yes."

"You want to get from her a sketch of her Mina?"

"Yes."

A pause followed.

It lasted only for a few seconds, during which Grice walked back and forth across the room twice.

"I'll go with you," he suddenly remarked, halting in front of the fireplace.

"Good," Tilman ejaculated.

At half-past six Fisher came in.

Grice was lolling back in a chair, smoking.

He was carefully disguised.

Fisher looked around the room.

He saw Grice, but he did not recognize him.

"Hello, Til," he ejaculated; "did Grice go?"

"Yes," Tilman replied, suppressing a smile, and winking at the detective.

Montieth, allow me to introduce you to my neighbor, Mark Fisher."

"I'm pleased to meet you, Mr. Fisher," the detective said in a disguised tone of voice, shaking hands with the artist. "I believe you are the famous impressionist artist."

"I'm that fool," Fisher rejoined.

"I've seen some of your—"

"Rot," interrupted Fisher.

"No—no—it isn't rot. I admire your school—"

"Well, that is more than I do."

"I—"

"Let us start. Come, Montieith, you will accompany us, won't you?" Tilman interpolated.

"Where to?" Grice asked.

"Dinner."

"Why certainly."

Fisher walked out ahead.

Grice whispered to Tilman as they passed out.

"Don't explain anything. He hasn't recognized me. I'll keep up the deception. You be careful and address me as Montieith."

"I'll mind my ps and qs," Tilman whispered back as he was locking the door.

They rejoined Fisher outside.

Walking across to Sixth avenue, they got aboard a surface car and rode up town.

At Thirtieth street they alighted.

It did not take them long to reach the Cafe Pollet.

Just as they were about to ascend the stoop the detective, who was slightly in advance of his companion, noticed a young man and woman, who were ahead of him.

His attention was attracted to them by his hearing the woman say:

"Isn't this an expensive place, Joe?"

Instantly Grice recognized Tillie Vane's voice, and from her question he surmised that her companion was Joe Goss.

He did not start or show any sign that he had made a discovery.

Walking in behind the couple he heard Joe request a waiter to conduct them to Room No. 5.

The waiter led Tillie and Joe upstairs, and the detective and his friends entered the main dining salon where a surprise was in store for them.

CHAPTER X.

The Cafet Pollet was a noted table d'hote kept by a French woman, whose husband had been the Empress Eugenie's chef.

M. Pollet was an artist in his line.

At one time his name was famous throughout the whole of Europe.

After his mistress was driven out of France M. Pollet and his wife left their native country and came to New York, where they opened the place on Thirtieth street, which at that time was part of the French quarter.

Being unused to American methods of advertising their table d'hote did not thrive for a long time, and for over a year its excellence was only known to a circle of M. Pollet's compatriots and a few artists and literary men, who discovered it during their explorations in the Tenderloin.

By degrees Bohemia learned of the excellence of the cuisine and the Cafet Pollet commenced to do a rushing business.

M. Pollet looked after the cooking and his wife, who was a beautiful, petite woman, of the attractive French brunette type, managed the finances, and saw to it that customers received every attention.

There was no place in town where one received better service.

At the Cafe Pollet one got a better dinner and more attention for the sum of one dollar than could have been secured at Delmonico's for ten.

The most fastidious epicure could find nothing to grumble at about what he received at the Pollet.

Madame became an idol.

No one could beat her mixing a salad.

For a time M. Pollet attended strictly to business.

But when customers commenced to fill all the rooms and the cash receipts every night amounted to more than the chef had ever received from his royal mistress for a whole month's work, M. Pollet lost his head, as the saying is.

He had imbibed the spirit of American freedom, and he wanted to be a gentleman right off.
 He hired a chef and assistants.
 For a time he supervised their work.
 Having considerable leisure he made acquaintances, and then he took to gambling.
 Madame protested.
 He turned a deaf ear to her entreaties.
 Many stormy scenes occurred between them.
 If the chef lost his head his wife did not.
 She attended strictly to business.
 Finally all the work devolved on her.
 She kept her eye on the cuisine as well as the cash drawer.

Even if M. Pollet were out of the kitchen the excellence of the cooking did not deteriorate.

The reputation was sustained by Madame even if M. Pollet was under the influence of absinthe three-quarters of the time.

M. Pollet reached the end of his rope at last and his wife had to send him to an asylum, where he died.

It is safe to say that madame did not shed many tears over his demise, because he had nearly broken her heart through his actions.

The cafe continued to prosper and at the time that Grice and his friends went there to meet Anita it was in the height of its glory.

The main dining room was crowded with patrons and the three men entered and in many of the upstairs rooms private dinner parties were taking place.

A handsome young French woman—madame's niece—presided at the cashier's desk, while madame flitted about the room from table to table, greeting the patrons, and seeing to it that they had every desire gratified.

Her face was always radiant with smiles and she had a pleasant word to exchange with every stranger, as well as her steady customers.

Tilman led the way through the main salon, inspecting the people at the tables, looking for Anita.

She was not in the front room, and the two entered the rear apartment, expecting surely to find her in there.

It was ten minutes after seven o'clock.

The men stood in the centre of the rear room and gazed around.

"She is not here," Fisher remarked, after he had scrutinized the face of every one at the tables.

"I don't know what to make of it," Tilman rejoined.

Grice remained silent.

He was thinking of the couple that had gone upstairs to No. 5.

"Perhaps something detained her," the impressionist continued; "let us take that vacant table over in the corner. She'll be along presently, I guess."

"Anita is always very prompt in keeping her appointments," Tilman remarked as they sat down at the table which Fisher had pointed out.

Madame came up and greeted them.

She was acquainted with Anita, who had dined at the place innumerable times, with Tilman and her friend Maria.

"Has Miss Posset been here?" Tilman inquired of madame.

"No, I have not seen her," the proprietress replied.

"We expected to meet her here."

"It is early yet. Ladies sometimes are a little late," and madame smiled.

"But she never is."

"She will come; you must have a little patience," and madame crossed the room to another table where she was to mix a salad.

But Anita did not come.

The three men did not order dinner until the hands of the clock pointed to half past seven, when Tilman directed a waiter to fetch on the soup.

Grice had grown impatient during the waiting and a presentiment seized him that something had happened to Anita.

He could not shake off the feeling.

But what could have happened to her? he thought.

When he sipped his soup he pondered over the question and he did not take part in the discussion which Tilman and Fisher were carrying on.

After finishing the soup Grice laid down his napkin, shoved his chair back from the table and said:

"You fellows go ahead and eat your dinner. I'm going out for a little while, and I'll be back."

"What's the matter—A—Montieth?" Tilman asked in surprise, looking up as the detective rose from the table.

"Nothing in particular."

Tilman rose and followed Grice over to the doorway.

"Where are you going?" he asked as they halted for a moment and were out of Fisher's hearing.

"I am going to find out what has detained Anita," the detective replied. "You stay here with Fisher. I'll be back."

"You don't imagine——"

"I'm going." And Grice hurried out, while Tilman returned to the table to keep his brother artist company, and to wait for the detective's return.

Anita did not live far from the Cafe Pollet.

Grice, who had secured the address from Tilman, was not long in reaching the place.

He rang the door bell.

A young woman opened the door.

"Is Miss Posset in?" the detective asked.

"No," the young woman replied. "She went out early."

"What time?"

"About ten minutes to seven."

"Did she tell you where she was going?"

"She said she was going to dine with some friends at the Cafe Pollet. I guess you will find her there."

"Did she go out alone?" Grice asked.

"Yes. You might try the Knickerbocker Cottage—she goes there frequently, and also to May's on 28th street."

Grice departed.

His mind was disturbed.

It was clear now that Anita intended to go to the Cafe Pollet when she left the house.

What had happened to make her change her mind?

She was not one of the kind to play a joke on any one.

Something must have happened.

What was it?

Had Anita met with an accident?

She might have been knocked down by a cable car or a cab while crossing Broadway on her way to the cafe, Grice thought as he pondered over the matter.

Such a thing was possible.

The detective decided to go to the Nineteenth precinct station house and make inquiries.

No one besides the officer and himself were in the place.

He pulled back his coat and displayed his headquarters badge, and did not mention his name.

"Sergeant, will you kindly read from the blotter the arrests that have been made and the accidents that have happened this evening in the precinct?" he said.

"I will," the sergeant replied, and he opened the blotter. "Are you on a case?"

"Yes."

"Headquarters?"

"Yes."

"Secret?"

"Yes."

"Well, here's the list:

"John Jones, 40 years old, drunk."

"Next."

"Peter Johnson, colored——"

"Go on."

"Mary DeWitt, disorderly——"

"Next."

"Sadie Porter, 60 years old; knocked down by cable car Broadway and 27th street."

"Go on."

"Jesse Peterson, disturbing the peace, colored——"

"Next."

"That's all."

"No hospital cases?"

"None."

"Thanks."

"Don't mention it."

Grice was more deeply perplexed than ever as he walked out of the police station.

He looked in at May's table d'hote and at the Knickerbocker Cottage, but Anita was not at either of these places.

Then the detective started back for the Cafe Pollet, thinking, perhaps, that during his absence she might have arrived.

He reached the cafe and halted on the foot of the stoop before entering.

Just then a cab drove up and stopped at the curb.

A tall man got out.

He wore a black beard.

Grice was in the act of ascending the stoop when the man spoke to the driver.

The detective paused, turned, and looked at the driver.

He was confident he had heard that voice before, but for a minute he could not recall where and he did not recognize the man in the dim light.

Pretending to be gazing down the street he waited and listened to the conversation.

"I'll pay you well for to-night's work," he heard the tall man exclaim.

Then he recognized the driver as a cabby who stood on the triangle near the Thirty-third street elevated railroad station.

The night-hawk's name was Elve Hart, and his cab was No. 113.

Grice had arrested him several times for various offences, and he knew his record was a bad one.

Hart had served a term in the State prison for robbing a man.

He would do anything for money.

"That's all right," Grice heard Hart reply as he got down off the seat and stood by the side of his fare, "but I want to see some of the dough now. I ain't going to take risks and be bilked."

"I'll pay you," the tall man rejoined.

Grice started back.

Suddenly it flashed across his mind when and where he had heard that voice.

It was in Tilman's studio the night before.

He scrutinized the tall man closely.

"If he is not Eugene Dupre, I'll eat my hat," he muttered. "He's disguised."

"That don't go," Hart ejaculated.

"How much do you want?" Dupre asked.

"A century."

"That's too much."

"No, it ain't my covey—not for the work I've just done and what I'm going to do for you."

"Well I——"

"Say, look here——"

"Well?"

"Suppose when you met that woman here in front of the door, when you came face to face with, slung your arm about her neck and clapped your hand over her mouth before she could cry boo, and then dragged her into the cab, without any one seeing you, suppose. I say, I had refused to drive you away—suppose I had called a cop—what then?"

"I'll give you a hundred now and more later. Will that satisfy you?"

"Cert. Fork out the century."

"Here it is."

"Tanks."

"You must keep a still tongue in your head."

"I always do when I am well paid."

"You wait here."

"Yes."

"I may be inside only a few minutes and then I may be an hour."

"I'll wait."

"The young woman who my friend and I will fetch out may have a jag on."

"I tumble."

Dupre turned around.

Grice had commenced to ascend the stoop.

He had heard every word of the conversation.

Dupre entered the cafe close behind him.

He halted for a moment in the hall and the detective heard him ask a waiter:

"Are my friends in No. 5?"

"Yes," the waiter replied, and Dupre hurried upstairs, while Grice gazed after him.

"No. 5, eh?" the detective thought, "that is the room to which Joe Goss took Tillie Vane. This is an important discovery. Dupre has gone there. He is a scoundrel. I knew that the minute I laid eyes on him. Who was that woman whom he took off—abducted? By jingo! Was it Anita?"

Grice was shaking with excitement.

A thousand-and-one thoughts crowded through his mind at once.

Could it be possible that he had, in this accidental

way, come across the main clew for which he had been searching?

Such a thing was not improbable.

More remarkable things than this had occurred to him during his career.

The goddess of fate often adopts strange methods in dealing with her victims.

A certain fatality seems to hover about the paths of some people.

In crime they are successful for a time in evading the law, but in the end they meet with a Nemesis.

From the discovery he had made, Grice realized that Dupre was a desperate and dangerous man.

That he was engaged in some villainous plot the detective was certain.

What was that plot?

Grice stood at the foot of the stairway thinking and trying to make up his mind what he ought to do.

A woman had been abducted.

Whether she was Anita or not made no difference.

Grice decided to try and rescue her.

He would block Dupre's game, whatever it was.

But what was the rascal and Joe Goss going to do will Tillie Vane? the detective thought.

Just as he asked himself this question he heard a noise at the head of the stairway and looking up he beheld Dupre and Goss holding Tillie up by the arms.

The men carried her down the stairs.

Grice slipped out into the street.

He reached the sidewalk and halted.

Hart was standing by the side of his cab.

Dupre and Goss came out of the cafe with Tillie, who had every indication of being intoxicated.

"That girl has been drugged," the detective muttered as he beheld Tillie's white face and saw that her eyes were half closed.

The men reached the sidewalk with their burden.

There Grice acted impetuously.

If he had stopped to think for a second he would have conducted himself differently.

But his blood was now boiling with indignation.

He knew that Tillie had been led into a trap.

He threw caution to the four winds.

He stepped in front of the men.

"You scoundrels," he hissed between his clenched teeth, and then his fists shot out from the shoulders with Tillie Vane? the detective thought.

Dupre was struck squarely between the eyes, and he went flying across the pavement, falling upon the stoop of the cafe.

Goss received a blow upon the jaw which felled him to the pavement and Tillie toppled over on top of him.

Grice's hat fell over and his disguise was dragged off with it.

Hart recognized him.

"It's Adam Grice," he cried out with terror, and springing up onto the box of his cab he snatched up the reins and gave his horse a terrible lash, which caused it to start off down the street at a breakneck pace.

Dupre heard Hart's cry.

He scrambled to his feet.

With the agility of a frightened fawn he bounded off toward Sixth avenue, and disappeared around the corner.

Goss rolled out from under Tillie.

Grice caught hold of the girl and raised her up.

He made a grab for Goss, who dodged out of reach and ran toward Seventh avenue.

The rumpus attracted a crowd.

Tillie was now miserable, and she hung like a limp rag upon the detective's arm.

A policeman rushed up.

He recognized Grice.

"What's the row, Mr.——"

"There, Casey," the detective interrupted him before he could mention his name. "Go call a cab!"

"Yis, sor," and Casey darted off to the corner.

Just then Tilman and Fisher came out of the restaurant.

"Hello!" Fisher ejaculated. "Til, it's Grice."

"So it is," Tilman replied, springing down the steps, and pushing his way through the crowd till he reached his friend.

"Be careful, Sam," Grice admonished before the artist could speak. "Help me to place this girl in the cab. Ask no questions. Where's Fisher?"

"Back there. We finished our dinners and were waiting when we heard there was a row outside, and we came out to see what it was about."

"Here's the cab."

The cab halted at the curb.

Grice and Tilman put Tillie inside.

Fisher came up.

The detective wished he had stayed away.

"Do ye want me, sor?" Officer Casey asked.

"No," Grice replied, and then bending over he whispered in Tilman's ear: "I'll go down to your studio. Get rid of Fisher." And then he called out to the cabman: "Drive on, cabby."

The cabman started his horse.

"What did Grice say?" Fisher asked of Tilman as they walked off toward Sixth avenue.

"He said he'd see me to-morrow," Tilman replied.

"I say, Sam——"

"Well?"

"What about your friend Monteith? You said you'd wait for him."

"I know I did. But I'm not going to wait all night. I have an appointment with a friend. Where are you going? I'll have to leave you, Mark. I'm sorry, but——"

"Don't offer any excuses, old fellow, go ahead and keep your appointment. I'll go over to the Kit-Kat Club and meet some of the boys."

"So long."

They separated.

Tilman hurried up the steps of the elevated railroad station and boarded a Battery train.

He got off at Eighth street and made his way to The Rookery as fast as his legs would carry him.

Just as he came up to the door of the studio building the cab with Grice and Tillie in it drew up.

The detective paid the cabman and then he and Tilman carried the unconscious girl into the artist's studio.

They placed her upon the divan.

She was breathing heavily.

"She's been drugged," Tilman ejaculated as he viewed Tillie's pale face.

"Yes," Grice replied.

"Who is she?"

"Tillie Vane."

"The deuce you say!"

"She'll have to sleep it off."

"Did you find Anita?"

"No."

"Well——"

"Sam, I have no time to explain now. I'll tell you what I want you to do."

"What?"

"This girl will not awaken for five or six hours. I want you to watch her. Do not admit any one to the studio. If she should come out from under the influence of the drug try and pacify her. Do not let her escape. I'll be back as soon as I can."

"I'll obey orders."

Grice departed, leaving the artist in a state of perplexity.

CHAPTER XI.

Grice was almost certain that the woman whom Dupre had abducted was Anita.

And another thing: He suspected that the rascal was none other than Lino Amalio Espor y Mina.

He had very little evidence to back up his theory, but nevertheless the evidence he had secured led him to believe that Dupre was either Mina or a man who was connected with him.

On his way uptown the detective thought over all that had occurred.

He recalled to his mind his meeting with Dupre in Tilman's studio the night before.

To weave the happenings into a continuous chain of reasoning was not very difficult.

If he had in his possession a picture of Mina many doubts would have been removed from his mind.

He was convinced that Dupre was the man who had tried to kill him.

Now that he knew Goss and Dupre were connected he understood the situation.

The rascals knew that he was working on the Ellsworth case.

Tillie had no doubt informed Goss and he had told Dupre, who, when he left the studio the night before, had laid in wait for him, and followed him to his flat.

If Dupre were not interested in the Ellsworth case then why should he attack him? Grice asked himself.

The detective was glad he had succeeded in rescuing Tillie.

He had made a mistake in acting so precipitously.

If he had been a little more circumspect he might have gained more information.

If he had not interfered with the men's plans, if he had permitted them to have placed Tillie in the cab and driven off, he could have tracked them to the place where Dupre had taken the other woman.

As it was, now the scoundrels knew that he was on their trail.

They would act more cautiously.

The first thing to be done, Grice reasoned, was to find Elve Hart, the cabman, and force a confession from him.

The cabby was badly frightened.

By this time he was in hiding some place.

Fortunately the detective was posted in regard to the man's habits.

If he had not known Hart his task would have been a difficult one.

Grice proceeded to a stable on Twenty-ninth street.

It was here Hart stabled his rig.

The detective made a change in his disguise so that he appeared like a cabman when he entered the stable and greeted one of the hostlers who was standing near the door.

"Where's Hart?" he inquired of the hostler.

"I don't know," the man replied.

"You don't know, eh? Didn't he leave a message with you for me—Phil Turnalty—who has the stand next to him?"

"Are you Phil Turnalty?"

"Sure I am."

"What do you want to see Elve for?"

"That's none of your business."

"He's not here."

"I know that; don't I see his rig over there, and don't I know the reason why he came in so early, ye flannel mouth spalpeen. Now tell me where I'll find him. If you don't I'll thump the stuffin' out of yez," and Grice made a threatening demonstration toward the hostler, acting with all the peculiarities of a tough night-hawk.

"You mustn't blame me, Turnalty," the hostler exclaimed, starting back, thinking the detective was going to put into execution his threat. "I'm acting on orders. Hart told me——"

"I know what he told yez," Grice thundered, taking a step forward with doubled fist upraised. "He told yez if any sneaking fly cop came 'round here yez wor to know nawthing, but he didn't tell yez to stave me off——isn't thot what?"

"Well, yes."

"I'm his best friend."

"I've heard him speak of Turnalty."

"Then yez know that we are pals?"

"Yes."

"Now tell me where to find him."

"He said he was going to Brady's saloon, down on Tenth avenue."

"I know the ale joint."

"He'll be in the back room playing skits."

"I might have known he'd go there."

"You——"

"See here:"

"Yes."

"If any one else comes around here snooping and asking for Hart tell 'em that he's gone over to Jersey, see?"

"All right."

"Here's a quarter, go yez and git a ball."

"Thot I will."

Grice lost no time in traveling to Brady's ale house.

This was a resort for 'longshoremen and men who hang around the river front.

It was not a pretentious place, for tall schooners of ale and third-rate beer was dispensed.

The detective entered the back room.

He saw Hart seated at a table smoking a cigar.

A large glass of ale was in front of him.

The cabman looked worried.

Grice went up to the table and sat down.

He looked around the room as if in search of some one.

Hart gazed at him.

Suddenly the detective's eyes rested upon the cabby and he asked in a low voice and with an air of mystery:

"I was sent down here by a friend of mine to deliver a message to a man named Elve Hart."

"What's your friend's name?"

"Phil Turnalty."

"Then he got my note?"

"Your note?"

"My name's Hart."

"Is it?"

"Yes."

"I'm the man you want to see."

"Oh."

"What did Phil Turnalty tell you to tell me?"

"He says for you to get out of here as quick as you can because a fly cop named Adam Grice was up to the stand asking for you, and one of the blokes said he'd be likely to find you down here."

"Who was it?"

"I don't know. Phil hustled me off to give you the tip. He wants you to come with me to a joint over on the East Side, where he will meet you."

"Let's get out of here."

"All right."

Hart showed from the pallor which spread over his face that he was nervous.

The detective and he left by the side door.

"We'll take a crosstown car," Grice remarked as soon as they were a block away from Brady's.

"I guess nit—we'll hoof it," Hart ejaculated.

"You needn't to be afraid."

"I ain't a-going to take any risks."

"Very well."

"Did you see Grice?"

"Yes."

"What did he say?"

"He asked for you."

"Was that all?"

"Yes."

"Didn't he say what he wanted me for?"

"No, but one of the blokes on the stand said that you was in a row outside the Cafe Pollet, and Officer Casey told Turnalty that Grice had 'done up' two men, who were trying to get a dopey girl into your cab."

"Hang the luck."

"You've got a bad man to stack up against, Hart."

"Curse him, I know that."

"If I were you I'd——"

"What?"

"I'd go to Grice——"

"And get pinched?—nit."

"He wouldn't pinch you."

"Yes he would; he's dead on me."

"What for?"

"He sent me up once."

"What for?"

"Nothing."

"Come off; he's not that kind of a bird to send a bloke up for doing nothing. He pinched me once, and when I gave up to him what he wanted to know he let me go."

"He wouldn't let me go."

"Then you are in this thing, whatever it is, pretty deep."

"No, I ain't."

"Then what are you afraid of?"

"Grice."

"Humph."

They walked along in silence.

Grice conducted Hart across town to a house on 28th street near Second avenue.

Here the detective had a room.

He opened the door of the house with a latch key.

Hart hesitated about entering. "Turnalty is upstairs," Grice remarked.

"I never heard him speak of this place," Hart rejoined.

"No. I live here and I told Phil he could use my room."

"Is that it?"

"Yes. Come on."

Hart hesitated no longer.

He followed the detective in and then upstairs to a room in the rear of the second floor.

The room was dark.

"I guess Phil will be here in a short time," Grice said as he turned on and lit the gas. "Sit down."

Hart threw himself into a chair and Grice locked the pocket, pointed it at the cabman, pulled off his disguise and ejaculated:

"Now Elve, we will talk business."

"Adam Grice!" Hart cried out.

He was unable to utter another word. His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth.

He saw that Grice had the drop on him, and it would be useless to offer any resistance.

The detective smiled.

Hart uttered an oath.

"Look pleasant, Elve," Grice said. "I'm not going to arrest you if you give me the information I want."

"Is that straight goods, Grice?" Hart asked.

"It is."

"I don't know much, but what little I do know I'm willing to give up."

"What do you know about Dupre?"

"Is that his name?"

"It is one of his names."

"I never met him until to-night—that's dead straight."

"Where did you meet him?"

"He came up to me on the stand about a quarter to seven o'clock. He said he wanted me to drive him to the Pollet, and wait for him."

"Well, he got into the cab and drove over to the Pollet."

"He got out, and just as he was about to ascend the stoop he came face to face with a woman."

"Before she could utter a word he had his arm around her neck and his hand over her mouth, and then dragged her into my cab."

"What did he direct you to do?"

"He ordered me to drive to No. — East Fortieth street."

"You obeyed."

"Yes."

"What happened when you reached the address?"

"The cove got out of the cab and ordered me to help him carry the woman into the house."

"She was insensible."

"I thought I smelled chloroform—but I wasn't sure."

"The cove opened the door and we carried the woman up to the second story front room."

"There we laid her out on the bed."

"I went down stairs and in a short time the cove came out and ordered me to drive back to the Pollet."

"I know what occurred between you."

"Then you were near?"

"Yes."

"Hump."

"Can you describe the woman?"

"She was a peach. She looked like as if she was Spanish—"

"Listen to me—"

"I will."

"I'll let you go, Elve, on one condition—"

"Name it?"

"You must keep mum—"

"I'll put a padlock on my lips."

"I'll trust you."

"You're not joking?"

"No—I'm in earnest."

"I—"

"Hart, why don't you be honest?"

"I try to live on the square, but you see—"

"I know—you are in with a bad crowd—"

"That's the size of it."

"We'll go out."

Grice shoved his pistol into his pocket and then he and Hart left the house.

When they reached the corner of Third avenue the detective said:

"Remember your promise, Hart—"

"Sure I will, Grice," the cabman rejoined.

Then they separated.

The detective hurried to the address in East Fortieth street.

He entered the house with a false key.

As he was ascending the stairway he heard a clock strike twelve.

He reached the door of the room and after a few moments he succeeded in unlocking it.

He entered the apartment.

His heart was beating with the rapidity of a trip hammer.

The room was dark.

In a second the detective was at her side. One glance showed him that the woman was bound and gagged, and that she was conscious.

Immediately he cut the cords, removed the gag from her mouth and assisted her to rise to her feet.

"Thank God!" she exclaimed.

Grice removed his disguise.

"Mr. Grice—" the woman ejaculated.

"Mrs. Gonzales, I believe; you have changed considerably since we last saw each other," the detective replied.

"Explain to me—"

"I will when we get out of here.

"Come with me."

"What time is it?"

"Midnight."

"I—"

"Come——"

Grice conducted Anita out of the house and they did not exchange a word until they were seated in Anita's room.

The detective was the first to speak.

He gave Anita an outline of what he knew of the occurrence of the evening, and then asked:

"Do you know the man who abducted you?"

"He was disguised," Anita replied. "The attack was made so suddenly that I could not offer the slightest resistance. The scoundrel chloroformed me."

"I believe you are—or were married to a man named Lino Amalio Espor y Mina—"

"Did Tilman—"

"He told me your story last night—"

"It is true."

"Have you ever heard that Mina was in New York?"

"My God! That man who attacked me was Mina! I understand now. The base rascal—"

"Have you a picture of Mina?"

"Yes. I have a sketch of him. I drew it several years ago."

Anita went to a bureau and opened a drawer, taking therefrom an artistic portfolio, which she opened. She took out a sketch, handed it to Grice and said:

"That is Lina."

The detective glanced at the drawing and exclaimed:

"The same!"

There was a ring of triumph in the tone of his voice.

His eyes sparkled.

Anita was surprised.

"Do you know him?" she asked.

"I have met him."

"He was in Tilman's studio last night," Grice answered.

"Does Tilman know him?"

"Yes—as Eugene Dupre—"

"Eugene Dupre?"

"Yes."

"When and where did he meet him?"

Grice explained.

Anita listened with close attention.

When the detective concluded she said:

"Lina's meeting with me to-night was accidental."

"I do not believe he knew I was here in New York, and he is not aware that I am living here."

"I think your conclusion is correct," Grice rejoined.

"Mark my word—that scoundrel poisoned that Professor Ellsworth. Probably he married the widow. He ought to be shot."

"He won't be shot, but he will be hung if I succeed in securing the evidence against him."

"He may escape."

"I've thought of that."

"Why not arrest him to-night?"

"I have not sufficient evidence upon which to secure a warrant and then I have not succeeded in locating the woman."

"You arrest him, Mr. Grice—take my advice. I'll prefer a charge against him as Eugene Dupre—and—"

"No. I do not want to do that. He won't get a chance to escape. You remain in the house for a few days."

"I'll do whatever you say."

"I will call on you this evening."

"Oh, my, it is three o'clock."

"So it is."

"Are you going to that room where you found me?"

"No. By this time Mina has been there, discovered your escape and he is now with the woman."

"You don't know that for a certainty."

"No, but I'll wager my surmise is correct."

Grice bade Anita good night.

He was convinced that the case was drawing to a conclusion.

He hurried down to Tilman's studio.

As he entered he beheld the artist talking with Tillie Vane.

They seemed to be quite friendly.

Tilman explained that Tillie had recovered consciousness about one o'clock; he had told her about Grice having rescued her, and she did not object to remaining in the studio until the detective returned.

CHAPTER XII.

Grice listened attentively to his friend's explanation, and when the artist concluded he turned to Tillie and said:

"You see now what a villain Joe Goss is."

"I am so grateful to you, Mr. Grice," Tillie rejoined.

"I am going to ask you a few questions."

"I'll answer every question you ask."

"Who sent you to Dr. Donneman's store, on Varick street, about a month ago?"

"Why I—who told you that I was there?"

"Never mind about who told me—tell me who sent you?"

"Joe Goss."

"How did he come to send you?"

"It was in this way:

"I went into Dr. Martin's store to get a prescription filled. I was going to leave the bottle and call for it on my way back from New York. I met Joe at the door. He said he was going to New York. I said I was going, too. He said, 'Come along, and not wait to have the bottle filled.' I went with him. On the train I gave him the bottle. Well, we got off at Eighth street. Joe said he had to have an order filled at Dr. Donneman's. When we got near the herb doctor's place Joe asked me to take the order in and get the drug, while he went to another store and bought something else. I agreed. Then he gave me my bottle, saying he had forgotten to fetch a bottle, that I was to get the drug in my bottle and he would get me another one when we returned to Morris Dock. I went in and got the drug and Joe met me on the corner when I came out. We then went uptown and had lunch. While we were at lunch a tall, black-bearded man came in and spoke to Joe. They went outside together. The man looked like Mina from the back. When Joe returned I asked him who his friend was, and he said his name was Dupre. I told him that he resembled Mina in the back and he laughed at me."

"When we left the restaurant we walked down Broadway."

"Standing in front of Hudnut's drug store, near Twenty-second street, I again saw the man whom Joe called Dupre."

"Joe said he worked in the store."

"All the way home, somehow or other, I could not get it out of my mind that the man Dupre was not Mina."

"Did Goss give you another bottle?"

"He did."

"Did you see Dupre to-night?"

"No."

"What happened in Room No. 5 at the Pollet?"

"As soon as we were seated at the table dinner was brought in."

"I felt all right until the coffee and liquor was served."

"Then Joe dismissed the waiter."

"I went over to the window and looked out for a moment and when I returned to the table I saw Joe putting a small bottle back into his pocket."

"I asked him what it was."

"He said it was some stuff for indigestion."

"I drank the cordial."

"Five minutes afterward I commenced to feel dizzy."

"That is all I remember."

"Are you sure you saw Dupre standing in front of Hudnut's?"

"I am positive."

Grice was silent.

This statement of Tillie's made many things clear to him.

It showed that the girl was entirely innocent of any collusion with Goss or Mina.

She did not know what kind of a drug she was purchasing.

The detective decided to let Tillie go home.

He directed her to remain in the house until such time as he should send for her.

He did not believe the rascals would attempt to molest her again.

At six o'clock Grice conducted the girl to the elevated railroad station and put her aboard a Harlem train.

Then he went to police headquarters and had a long conference with Inspector Byrnes.

They considered every particle of evidence critically.

"There are many links still missing," the inspector remarked after he had finished considering a legal point in the case. "There is no doubt in my mind but what both Mina and Mrs. Ellsworth are guilty. But you want more evidence. You must show that either the woman or the man purchased poison just previous to the death of the Professor."

"I am going to make inquiries at Hudnut's drug store. When Tillie Vane said she saw Mina standing in front of that store it occurred to me that he might have purchased the poison there. Of course this is a mere supposition. But its falsity or truth can soon be proven."

"You must interview the Mexican consul."

"I intend to do so."

"You see, Grice, the law will cover the prisoners all over with an armor that can only be pierced by proof of guilt."

"I know that."

"This is an extraordinary case."

"It matters nothing what rumors we may have heard about the couple, what suspicions we may entertain, or even what opinions we may have formed."

"The law will declare the couple innocent unless the proof is positive."

"We cannot afford to go into court with a weak case."

"The case will not be weak."

"I know you will strive to get the proof, but still there is a chance that you may fail."

"I will not fail."

"The main question will be: Did Professor Ellsworth die by poison? If he did, was his wife a voluntary agent in procuring his death? The evidence must be strong. The chemical examination of Prof. Whit-haus is of great moment. We are able to rely upon his integrity and skill. He is known as a chemist whose attainments in this science are second to none. His evidence will have great weight with the jury, and he will show from Dr. Tarnsworth's statement that Professor Ellsworth had all the symptoms of poison by arsenic. It is certain if he were murdered at all it was by arsenic. Did Mrs. Ellsworth do the murder, or Mina? That will be a point hard to prove unless one or the other confesses. Both of them may have been in it—and then again only one may have administered the poison. It is well to consider all these things, so we may know how to act."

"If Ellsworth were poisoned by his wife on account of her passion for Mina, her defence will be exceedingly difficult, even if she be innocent—for those things which might be evidence only of criminal passion will be construed as evidence of participation in the murder. Why did she do the murder? What motive could she have for destroying her husband? We must show that she was infatuated by a guilty passion for Mina, and an avaricious longing after the wealth of which she believed him possessed, and leagued with him to destroy her husband. We know that Mrs. Ellsworth was most strangely infatuated with the Spaniard from the commencement. Tillie Vane and others will prove this. Professor Ellsworth believed it."

"In regard to this point our evidence is strong," Grice remarked. "The fact will be of great weight against the woman, and it will show a motive for the commission of the crime."

"Yes," the inspector rejoined. "The evidence of poisoning by the woman seems almost irresistible, because Ellsworth was taken seriously ill about the time he took the chicken soup, which his wife gave him."

The door of the office opened and a detective entered.

"Inspector," the man said, "I've finished making the examination of the records of the Bureau of Vital Statistics."

"What did you discover?" the great detective asked.

"On January 10th a widow, by the name of Jane Ellsworth was married to a man named Lino Amalio

Espor y Mina by the Episcopalian Bishop, H. C. Potter. In the record Mina's birthplace is given at Santa Clara, Mexico, and the woman's late residence, Morris Dock, New York."

"Another link. You may go."

The man left the room as the inspector turned to Grice.

"See," he remarked, "we can draw more conclusions from this new link."

"I'm going to see the manager of Hudnut's."

"I will send out men to search for Mina, Goss and the woman, and instruct them to keep them under surveillance until we conclude to arrest them."

Grice went direct from police headquarters to Hudnut's drug store on Broadway, near Twenty-second street.

He had removed his disguise and when he entered the manager's office he did not have to tell who he was, because Dr. Field was acquainted with him.

He explained the situation to the doctor, and told him what he wanted to find out, describing Mina and many of his characteristics.

"That man has been in here many times during the past year. I recognize him from the description, Grice," Dr. Field exclaimed after he had listened to the detective's statement.

"Did he purchase any arsenic here?" Grice asked.

"Yes. I have his signature in the poison book. I remember the incident as well as if it happened yesterday. He signed the name of Eugene Dupre."

"The first time I saw him he came in to inquire for the residence of the Mexican Consul. He asked me in broken English, which induced me to speak in Spanish in giving the direction to him. He then left the store. Some time after, one evening, he came in with a lady, and they had soda water. He spoke to me and casually he mentioned his being the son of the Governor of Santa Clara, Mexico. Then he came in frequently after that, and was quite chummy."

"A week before Christmas, it was at night, he came in with a woman. He and she drank soda water. He asked me in Spanish if we had any arsenical soap for the preparation of birds. I said we had not, but I would prepare it. He said that was useless, but if we had arsenical powder, that would answer. I sold him a quarter's worth of arsenic, and he signed the poison book. Then he and the woman departed."

"Have you the same kind of arsenic in stock?"

"Yes. It is Fowler's preparation."

"Let me have a sample."

Dr. Field put up some of the poison and gave it to the detective, who went immediately to Dr. Whit-haus's residence.

The chemist made an analysis of the poison, and when he was through he said:

"Grice, this is the same make as the arsenic which I found in Ellsworth's stomach."

"That will be a clincher," the detective remarked. "Dr. Field will be able to identify both Mina and the woman who was with him—that woman, I believe, was Mrs. Ellsworth. Then we will produce the poison book with the signature of Eugene Dupre, which the chiro-graphic experts will prove is Mina's handwriting."

Grice went to the Mexican Consulate.

The Consul was in his office.

The detective was ushered in.

He needed no introduction, because he had had business with the Consul before.

"Do I know a man named Lino Amalio Espor y Mina," the Consul said, repeating the detective's question. "I know of a Cuban swindler by that name."

"What do you know about him?" Grice asked.

"No good."

"Last May, I think it was, two persons came into my office."

"One of them saluted me in Spanish, telling me that he was an unhappy Mexican, whose name was Mina. The other person was a lady, whose name was Mrs. Ellsworth. I believe she and her husband kept a school at Morris Dock. I offered them seats and they sat down."

"Mina told me that he was a Mexican young man, whose family was in Santa Clara. His father was a high official there. I had never heard the name before, but I said nothing and listened to the man's story."

"His grandfather was very rich and he had always lived with him."

"He said that the old man had been induced to send him to Europe, to complete his education, with an Englishman.

"Mina said that he and the man arrived in France. In a few days the Englishman died suddenly while in church.

"Mina said he could not speak French and he was robbed by the officials.

"A gentleman whom he met took pity on him, and gave him enough money to pay his passage to New York, where he expected to find a school chum and get money from him to help him to get home.

"When he arrived in New York he discovered that his friend had gone to California.

"His friend had lived in Morris Dock.

"He told me how he had tramped up there, his money having given out, and he related how the Ellsworths had kindly taken him in and provided for him.

"He requested me to send letters to his parents and he said he was going to stay with the Ellsworths until I received the answers.

"I told him that I did not believe his story to be true, because I observed that his manners and his bad language did not show him to be such a man as he would have me believe.

"We spoke in Spanish all the time and Mrs. Ellsworth, who was sitting near the window some distance away, I do not believe heard what was said.

"Mina said that his early education had been neglected.

"I asked him for proof that he was a Mexican, and he asked what proof. I asked him for his passport. He replied it had been stolen in France.

"I told him finally that I would send the letters to Mexico and I would make inquiries about him.

"If his story should be true I would help him.

"Then he and the lady departed.

"I telegraphed to Mexico as soon as they were gone.

"The next day I received a letter from Mina, telling me that I need not bother any further, that he had received assistance from his friend.

"I then became convinced that his call at the Consulate was only a bluff to impress Mrs. Ellsworth.

"He was afraid the lies of which his story was made up would be discovered and he wanted to have me cease making inquiries.

"This made me think him an impostor.

"The answer came to my cablegram.

"No one in Santa Clara knew Mina or his family.

"A few days after Mr. Beese, the tailor, came, and asked me if I knew Mina.

"I told him that I believed him to be an impostor.

"My detective went to work on the matter.

"He discovered that Mina had come to New York from Havana on April 4th, on a Ward Line steamer.

"I then wrote to Mrs. Ellsworth, telling her of my discoveries, and advising her and her husband to turn Mina out of their house.

"I received no reply to this letter and I have not heard of Mina since."

"Then you are not aware that he married Mrs. Ellsworth?"

"No. Is her husband dead?"

"He is."

Grice gave the Consul an outline of the case.

"That rascal is the murderer," the Consul exclaimed, when Grice finished. "He must have hypnotized the woman. She was so infatuated with him that she would not believe anything against him."

"It is curious."

"You ought to arrest both of them."

"I intend to."

When Grice left the Mexican Consulate he made up his mind to place the man and woman under arrest as soon as he succeeded in locating them.

Mina had worked his points beautifully.

But an indomitable man was on his track.

Grice would never rest until he landed the criminals in jail.

The trial would be a sensational one.

Mrs. Ellsworth had money and she would undoubtedly engage the best legal talent to defend her and the man who was now her husband.

The detective hardly knew where to commence to look for Mina.

While on his way uptown he thought that Goss and the scoundrel would probably be together, and he might get onto the prisoners' trail by looking up Goss.

Accordingly he went to Riker's drug store and inquired of the clerks about the drug clerk.

He learned from the store detective and others that Goss had been in the habit of visiting Dallie's gambling house.

As soon as he made this discovery Grice went to a costumer's and procured a disguise.

He surmised that he might find out something about Goss at the notorious resort.

Half an hour after leaving the costumer's Grice entered Dallie's.

He had a premonition that his case would soon be completed.

CHAPTER XIII.

Dupre—or, more properly speaking, Mina—after he had got out of sight of the Cafe Pollet, went direct to Dallie's establishment.

He expected that Joe Goss would show up there, and he was not mistaken, for a few minutes after he entered the card room the drug clerk came in.

Joe had a swollen jaw and his companion in crime had a pair of black eyes.

Mina was furious with rage.

He swore like a fiend and took an oath that he would make the detective pay dearly for the manner in which he had treated him.

He and Goss were the only persons in the bath room.

"I'm through," Joe ejaculated as soon as Mina became quiet.

"You are through!" the Cuban ejaculated, displaying his white teeth. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that I'm not going to stack up against that detective. I'm not going to help you with any more of your schemes."

"You will help me!" Mina hissed, and his face was aflame with passion.

"No, siree," Joe replied; "I'm no fool. You can't make a tool of me any longer. I chuck up the whole job."

"Do you mean to betray me?"

"No. I'm not going to tell on you; but I am going to wash my hands of you—"

"I'll—"

"What?"

"Kill you if you do not help me."

Joe laughed.

He stared at Mina for a minute in silence.

"Say, look here," he ejaculated; "do you think I'm afraid of a Greaser like you?"

"Carambo!" Mina hissed, and he ran his hand into his inside coat pocket as if he were going to draw a weapon.

Joe noticed the movement.

As quick as a flash, he pulled out his revolver, pointed it at Mina's head and exclaimed:

"I'm ready for you. You attempt to attack me and I'll put an ounce of lead into your brain."

Mina's hand grasped the hilt of a dagger, but he did not draw it when he saw that Goss had him cornered. He released his grasp and withdrew his hand.

Joe laughed.

"You don't want to fight now, do you?" he sneered.

"I'll pay—"

"You'll pay me off, eh? was that what you were going to say? You'll pay me off, when you get a chance to strike me in the back in the dark. That's just like the snakes of Spaniards. You're afraid to fight open and above aboard. I've half a mind to kill you here and now. The world would be well rid of you."

"Sacra! Hear him! The ingrate! The cur! Carambo!"

"Get out of here."

Joe's finger was pressed against the trigger.

Not for a second did he remove his eye from Mina.

He was afraid if he did the rascal would spring upon him.

"I'll make you—" Mina hissed.

"Git! Scoot!" Goss interrupted before his companion could finish the sentence.

"Carambo!"

Just then the door of the wash room opened and Phil Dallie entered.

"What does this mean?" the boss gambler asked, looking from Mina to Goss.

"This sneak was going to knife me," Joe ejaculated, still keeping his pistol pointed at Mina's head. "I simply drew my revolver to protect myself and for—"

tunately I succeeded in getting the drop on him before he was able to draw his dagger."

"He lies!" Mina snarled.

"What was the quarrel about?" Dallie asked.

"Nothing, nothing," Mina ejaculated.

"Yes it was," Goss said. "I helped him in a certain matter. Adam Grice got onto the game—he came down on us like a load of bricks. Look at his eyes. Ain't they beaute? Look at my jaw. I told him that I was through with him and that I was not going to stack up against Grice—"

"That is where you are sensible," Dallie interjected. "Grice is a bad man to run up against. If he is after you, Dupre, you'd better pack up and skip out of the city—"

"I—" Mina stammered.

"You'd better get out of here," Dallie continued.

"Do you mean that?" Mina demanded.

"I do—"

"I'll—"

"Come now, Dupre, go peaceably. I don't want anyone coming into this house who has Adam Grice on his trail."

"You shall regret this, Phil Dallie—"

"Don't threaten me—"

"You shall pay dear—"

"Get out—"

The gambler made a threatening gesture as if he were about to boot the rascal out of the room.

He disappeared.

Then Dallie turned to Goss, who had put up his pistol.

"Goss," he said, "that fellow is dangerous, and you better keep out of the road."

"What game is he playing?"

"I don't care to tell," Joe replied.

"Is Grice after you?"

"No."

"Is this straight?"

"It is."

"Come down to my office, I want to have a talk with you."

They descended to Dallie's office and as soon as they were seated the gambler asked:

"How are your finances?"

"Pretty low," Joe answered.

"You are out of a job?"

"I am."

"Would you like to work for me?"

"Yes—if you—"

"Paid you well?"

"Yes."

"I want another 'Spider,' and I think you would make a good one. I've been studying you for some time, and I've come to the conclusion that you have metal."

"How much will you pay?"

"Fifty dollars a week."

"And expenses?"

"Yes."

"I'm your man."

"Then report to me to-morrow."

"At what hour?"

"Noon."

"I'll be on hand."

"Very well—you keep a still tongue in your head."

"I understand."

Thus ended the conference between Goss and Dallie. Mina, after leaving the gambling house, went direct to the house in which he had left Anita a prisoner.

He discovered that someone had rescued her.

"This is Adam Grice's work," he cried out, when he made the discovery, and he rushed from the house.

He traversed the darkest streets, in a circuitous route until he arrived at a flat house, in West Sixtieth street.

He darted into the vestibule and then opened the door of a flat on the first floor.

In the front room a woman was seated in a large easy chair.

She looked at Mina.

She saw that his eyes were swollen and black.

"What happened to you, darling?" she asked, in solicitous tones.

"Let us sit down and I will tell you," Mina replied, leading her over to a sofa and placing her on it.

"Let me get some water and bathe your eyes."

"No—I must talk to you—"

"About what?"

"Listen."

"Well?"

"We have been happy together—"

"Happy? Yes. Never did I know what happiness was until I met you. Ellsworth was too cold—"

"You have heard of a detective named Adam Grice?"

"I know him. What of him?"

"He is now engaged in investigating Ellsworth's death."

"My God! You do not mean it! You are joking!"

"It is true. I am not joking."

Upon Mrs. Ellsworth's face were displayed marked signs of fear.

She released her hold on Mina and trembled violently.

"Tell me what you have found out?" she gasped.

"After we left the Academy people commenced to talk," Mina said. "A man named Patterson commenced to make an investigation. I learned this from Joe Goss, with whom I have kept on friendly terms. I did not tell you anything about it because I did not want to worry you."

"Patterson, a few days ago, went to the police. Goss learned this from Tillie Vane, and he told me about it."

"That girl was always jealous of me."

"And she is the one who has caused all the trouble."

"Grice was assigned to make an investigation, and he immediately went to work."

"He saw Tillie Vane and she told him a whole string of stuff."

"How much he has discovered I cannot tell."

"This is indeed serious."

"I planned to get Tillie out of the way to-night and Grice interfered."

"Then you do not know how much Grice has discovered?" she asked.

"No," Mina replied, "I wish I did know, because I would then be able to decide how to act."

"How much cash have you?"

"Ten thousand dollars."

"We will leave the city to-morrow night."

"Where will we go to?"

"Mexico—to my home—"

"Lino, is Mexico really your home?"

The woman fastened her eyes upon him.

He did not flush and steadily returned her gaze.

"Mexico is my home," he replied with solemn emphasis. "That Consul lied about me because he is an enemy of my father."

"Why have your parents not replied to your letters?"

"I cannot account for it. Something must be wrong. They are worth millions. Perhaps the Consul did not send my letters."

"You wrote other letters, which I mailed—they did not go through the Consul—"

"I know."

"We will go to Mexico."

"You will be a grand lady there. You will wear diamonds of fabulous price."

When they retired they were determined to leave New York the next night.

No warning came to them to tell them that Grice was winding around them a coil, from which they would be unable to escape.

CHAPTER XIV.

Goss was on hand promptly the next day and received his instructions in regard to his work for Dallie. As he was coming out of the gambler's office Grice entered the main saloon and beheld him.

He watched him move about the room and when he left the house he followed him out.

When Goss reached the corner of Broadway, Grice, who had removed his disguise, stepped up to him and tapped him on the shoulder, saying in a suave tone:

"A pleasant day, Mr. Goss?"

The drug clerk started.

"Yes, it is a very pleasant day," Joe replied with a smile.

This answer puzzled Grice.

"I want you to accompany me to police headquarters," Grice said after a moment's reflection.

"Am I under arrest?" Joe asked with apparent unconcern.

"Yes."

"Have you a warrant?"

"No."

"What is the charge against me?"
 "Inspector Byrnes will tell you."
 "I will go with you. But first let us stop in at Shank Draper's and get some cigars."
 Grice allowed Joe to purchase some cigars.
 As they rode down to Mulberry street the detective did not talk with his prisoner.
 He was engaged in studying him closely while he stood smoking on the front platform of the car with him.

There was a broad smile upon the drug clerk's face. Grice could not make it out.
 The inspector was in his office as they entered.
 Grice said to him:
 "Inspector, this is Joe Goss."
 The great detective fastened his eyes upon the drug clerk, studied him for a moment, and then with a wave of the hand exclaimed:
 "Be seated, sir."
 "Thanks," Joe rejoined as he sat down into a chair with a weary air.
 The chief exchanged glances with Grice.
 Like his aide, he, too, was astonished.
 Goss cleared his throat.
 "Have you any objection to my smoking?" he asked.
 "None," the inspector replied.
 "Will you kindly tell me what the charge is against me?"

"Mr. Grice will do that," the inspector answered, and leaning back in his chair he nodded his head to Grice to take charge of the examination of the prisoner.

"Goss," Grice said, "you know what happened at the Cafe Pollet last night?"

"You almost broke my jaw and you gave Mina a pair of black eyes," the clerk replied in a matter-of-fact way, as if he were telling what had occurred some persons in whom he had not the slightest interest.

"Did you ever see this bottle before?"
 Grice displayed the bottle which he had found on the floor of his room and which contained the East Indian drug.

Goss took the bottle into his hand, glanced at the label, shrugged his shoulders, smiled, elevated his eyebrows, and replied:

"Yes, I've seen this before; it was once in my possession."

"Then you must have seen this order?" showing the order.

"Yes. Dr. Martin gave it to me. It was for ginseng. I changed it to read domha. I suppose Tillie has told you—"

"She has."
 "I purchased the ginseng at another store."
 This free admission astonished the shrewd sleuths still more and they wondered what kind of a game the clerk was playing.

"To whom did you give this drug?" Grice asked.
 "Mina," Goss replied. "He asked me to purchase it for him. I did so and he paid me for the service."
 "Gentlemen, I had no idea what he wanted to use it for."

"How long have you known Mina?"
 "For several months I have been acquainted with him."

"He was first introduced to me as Dupre, but after we became better acquainted I learned that his name was Mina."

"And now, gentlemen—"
 Goss straightened up in his chair and looked at the detectives.

His listlessness was all gone now.
 "Well?" Grice queried.
 "You desire to arrest Mina?" Goss queried.

"Yes."
 "You want information from me?"
 "We do."
 "I can tell you where you can find the rascal, and I can furnish you with other very valuable information—and I am willing to testify against him. But—"
 He paused and his eyes sparkled.
 "But what?" Grice asked.
 "I must be allowed to go free; what I did last night was only a trivial offence."
 "And if we refuse to let you go?"
 "Then my lips are sealed."
 "Oh!"

He saw through the rascal's game now.
 He realized that Goss must have had a falling out with Mina.

The inspector laughed.
 He bit off the end of a cigar and remarked while he was lighting the weed:

"I understand you now, Mr. Goss. At first your conduct puzzled me, I'm free to confess."

"You and your friend Mina had a serious quarrel last night at Dallie's gambling house."

Goss started.
 He looked at the inspector in surprise.
 Grice was also astonished.

He saw that his chief had information which he did not know about, and he surmised that some stool pigeon must have furnished that information.

"Mina, or Dupre, tried to knife you—and you got the drop on him," the inspector went on, and his eyes sparkled while he continued to smile. "Phil Dallie interfered—isn't it so?"

"You seem to be pretty well informed," Goss answered, and he grew nervous now.

"Very few things occur in that gambling house but what I know about—"

"Then there are spies there—"

"You may call them spies—in police parlance they are called stool pigeons. Some people find it profitable to act as stool pigeons—remember that, Joe Goss—make a note of it—"

There was insinuating significance in every word the inspector uttered.

Joe was uncomfortable.

"How much does he know?" he thought as he glanced at the inspector and remained silent. "Does he know that Dallie has engaged me as a 'Spider'?"

The inspector at that moment remarked—and it seemed as if he had read the young man's thoughts:

"Your friends will probably call you Spider Joe now," and he laughed.

Goss' face became flushed.

He was sure now that the inspector knew that Dallie had hired him.

"Never mind, Goss," the chief ejaculated, after a silence, "you may be of use to us some day. We won't quarrel now. Tell us all you know about the Spaniard and you may walk out of headquarters a free man."

"Are you in earnest?" Goss asked.

"I am."

"Then I will tell all I know."

"Now, Grice, you question him. I've got to go out now. You act on his information, and if you need any men to assist you take them from the bureau."

The inspector closed down the top of his desk, put on his hat and walked out.

"That man is a Sphinx," Goss remarked, looking after the chief.

"He is more than that," Adam Grice replied.

He proceeded to question Goss in regard to his dealings with Mina.

The drug clerk furnished the detective with the address at which Mina and Mrs. Ellsworth were living.

"Now, Mr. Grice," Goss said as the detective paused to think of a question to ask, "Mina made a confession to me a week ago in regard to the death of Professor Ellsworth."

"What did he tell you?" Grice inquired.

"Do you know how he came to go to the Academy to live?"

"I do."

"Then I need not repeat that story now."

"You need not."

"Mina told me that Mrs. Ellsworth fell desperately in love with him almost at sight."

"At first he had no intention of remaining at the Academy for more than a day or so."

"But when he made the discovery that the woman was in love with him—that she possessed considerable money in her own right—and that she was the boss of the household, he made up his mind to work every point he could so that he could remain at the Academy."

"Months passed."

"Professor Ellsworth commenced to grow suspicious, and he and Mina had a terrible quarrel."

"Mrs. Ellsworth sided with the Spaniard."

"Mina made up his mind to put the Professor out of the way and marry the widow."

"He bought arsenic at Hudnut's place on Broadway, near Twenty-second street."

"He sounded Mrs. Ellsworth, and he discovered that she would never agree to help put her husband out of the way.

"She wanted Mina to take her away to Mexico.

"But that was not his game.

"He had no money and he wanted to get control of the woman's property."

"Did he tell you all this?"

"Yes. I was astonished. But he was intoxicated at the time, and you know that many people will tell all they know while under the influence of liquor."

"That is so.

"Go on."

"Mina made up his mind to poison Ellsworth slowly, so that his wife would not suspect.

"He commenced to put small portions of arsenic into the professor's tea and coffee whenever he got the chance.

"For six days he did this.

"Then the professor was taken ill and had to go to bed.

"Mrs. Ellsworth was very attentive, or appeared to be. The doctor was called in at the last moment—he did not suspect anything.

"He ordered chicken broth to be given to the professor.

"The girl prepared it."

"Mina put the arsenic into it.

"The professor died.

"After the funeral Mrs. Ellsworth was more deeply in love with Mina than ever.

"The neighbor's ducks died. Mrs. E. heard of it, and then she suspected. She accused Mina. He confessed to her, but even then she did not cease to love him.

"She immediately planned to sell the property and leave Morris Dock.

"A purchaser was found and Mina and the woman came to New York.

"They lived at various places under the name of Dupre.

"As the weeks passed they concluded that the crime would never be discovered and Mina commenced to go about town.

"The woman supplied him with plenty of money and he was satisfied with his bargain.

"I gave him the first tip about your investigation.

"Tillie innocently informed me of it.

"I was hard up at the time and—"

"You thought you could make money out of Mina?"

"Yes."

"The interview was concluded.

"Grice directed Goss to remain in the inspector's office until his return, and he placed a man in the room to watch him, so that he could not leave.

"With one of the headquarters' detectives Grice went uptown to the flat occupied by Mina and the woman.

"There he found the couple packing up their things and preparing to leave.

"The surprise was so great that neither Mina nor Mrs. Ellsworth offered any resistance.

"The detectives conducted them to headquarters and the inspector kept them on the rack for several hours.

"Neither would make a confession.

"File No. 1,161 proved to be one of the most sensational cases ever tried in the New York courts.

"The woman engaged the best legal talent to defend her and the man she loved.

"She was tried first before Recorder Smyth.

"The lawyers resorted to every trick in the law to save her and they succeeded in having her acquitted, strange as it may seem.

"But Mina was convicted.

"The lawyers fought as hard for him as they did for the woman.

"The evidence was so strong and conclusive against him that the jury brought in a verdict of guilty without leaving the court room.

"When the rascal was brought up for sentence an arrest of judgment was secured.

An application for a new trial was made. The Court of Appeals sustained the judgment of the lower court.

A year after the conviction Mina was hanged and rained for sentence.

He was brought up before Recorder Smyth and if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed upon him.

He stood at the bar and made a full confession.

He prayed that a priest of the Roman Catholic might be sent to him, so that he might prepare for death by confession and absolution, and taking of communion according to the rites and monies of the church.

His request was granted, and then in solemn voice, Judge Smyth, with quivering voice, rose and delivered the following sentence:

"Lino Amalio Espor y Mina, the sentence which the law imposes upon you is, that you be taken from the Tombs prison of the City and County of New York, from whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution; and that you be then hanged by the neck until you are dead. And may God have mercy on your soul."

Mina was executed a month later.

The wretched woman who had ruined her life, him clung to him until the last.

Then she faded out of the public mind.

People forgot all about the case.

One night a few weeks ago Grice and I were conducting a party of friends through Chinatown, showing them the sights.

When we were coming out of the Chinese Doyer street we saw a crowd collected in front of one of the adjoining houses.

We went up to find out what was the matter. We beheld the form of a woman lying stretched upon the pavement.

Some one said that she had committed suicide.

I stepped forward with my friend and we looked at the face, which was bloated and disfigured from disipation. The clothing was dirty and in shreds. We could see what a miserable existence the murderess must have led.

Suddenly Grice caught hold of my arm and pered:

"Don't you recognize her?"

"I looked closer at the countenance—the outline a familiar expression—there were still traces of it in them, but I could not remember that I had seen her before, so I replied:

"No."

"Professor Ellsworth's wife," Grice whispered, then I recognized her.

We got out of the crowd.

The body was taken to the Morgue and the next day the newspapers chronicled the death of "Jane Lark," but none of the reporters got onto the fact she was the woman who figured in the famous worth murder case a few years before.

Anita is now happily married to Sam Tilman.

Another artist now occupies the studio in The City.

The couple live in a cottage near Prospect Park, Brooklyn.

Anita's interest in Cuba has not diminished. She has given her countrymen valuable assistance in the struggle which they have been making against Spanish cruelty and oppression.

Joe Goss is now serving a term in Sing Sing.

For three years he served Dallie as a spider, then when he got into trouble the boss gambler no further use for him.

Dallie still flourishes and his house still enjoys mysterious protection.

Tillie is married to a farmer, whose acquaintance she made after the conclusion of the trials.

If you ask Adam Grice what was the most difficult case he ever investigated, he will tell you File No. 1,161.

[THE END.]

A great detective story by the popular author, Bernard Wayde, entitled, "RODY ROGAN AND HIS TERRITORY; OR, AN IRISH-AMERICAN DETECTIVE IN MIQUELON," will be published in the Old Cap Collier Library, out next Saturday. Price 5 cents. For sale by all newsdealers.